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GENERAL BOULANGER

GENERAL BOULANGER

A Biography

BY

F. TURNER

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO COUNT DILLON

24436

LONDON
SWAN SONNENSCHEIN & CO.
PATERNOSTER SQUARE
1889

24436

BUTLER & TANNER,
THE SELWOOD PRINTING WORKS,
FROME, AND LONDON.

PREFACE.

KIND Fate having brought me into frequent contact with General Boulanger, and made me a close witness of his herculean struggles and his colossal triumphs, it occurred to me that an account of his marvellous career might be interesting to the English public. His stay in London having taught them to know him better, to fully appreciate the patriotic task he has undertaken, the interest they already felt in him has naturally increased, and rendered such a work as this almost a necessity.

In the following pages I have given an impartial account of his career as a soldier, as a deputy, and as chief of the National party, and described the successive stages by which a general, without the halo of a great name, or the *prestige* enjoyed by a victorious commander, has, within the short space of three years, rendered himself the most important figure in European politics, and contrived to divide France into two distinct camps, composed of Boulangists and anti-Boulangists.

Having seen the General in all possible positions—in the hour of triumph, after a crushing defeat, riding, full of energy and life,

at the head of his troops, hanging between life and death, in private life, and at public banquets—I have had a good opportunity of forming a fair estimate of his character.

He always appeared to me to be a predestined man, a leader who was wanted, and therefore produced at exactly the right moment, with that mathematical precision which has always been one of Nature's chief characteristics. Capable of the most tiring exertions, gifted with a capacity for hard work which staggers ordinary mortals, self-possessed, prudent, a remarkably good listener, saying what he has to say in a clear, straightforward way which convinces his hearers, and leads them to think, "Here is a man who knows what he wants, and is able to formulate his ideas in clear language," the General soon distinguished himself from the crowd of nonentities by whom he was surrounded.

His presence invariably raises the tone of general conversation, and gives it an interesting, animated character. People are anxious to display their best intellectual wares, and to express what they have to say with epigrammatic point and rhetorical smartness. This struck me very forcibly one evening I happened to be dining with the General, at a house where a celebrated literary lady was on the war-path. One could hear she was literally labouring to talk well; her style was so clear, so terse, and epigrammatic, that her sentences positively cut like razors—one could almost feel the instrument going over one's face, and it was positively painful to listen to her. Shutting my eyes for a moment, I could very well imagine she was reading aloud one of her clever *Gaulois* articles.

Another thing that strikes one is, how much of the General's

success is due to very commonplace, homely qualities: punctuality, a talent for hard work, good humour, and a just appreciation of the value of time.

Naturally these good qualities imply the possession of certain defects of character which tend to counterbalance them. A man who is always self-possessed must naturally be gifted with extraordinary powers of dissimulation; strength of will develops a certain amount of obstinacy, which may or may not be applied to a good purpose; the steady pursuit of some object is apt to create a certain amount of forgetfulness of services rendered; a leader cannot always stop to reward his men as he would like; the instrument of to-day does its work, and disappears, giving place to a more immediate and useful agent. Many have doubted whether Boulanger possesses those sentiments of gratitude which formed such a beautiful trait in the third Napoleon's character, and insured him so many friends, who remained faithful in disgrace, and even unto death.

Personally, I have seen none of these instances of ingratitude, and merely mention the matter to preclude any suspicion of undue partiality towards a man whom so many hundreds and thousands have definitely adopted as their idol.

He possesses a sensibility almost feminine in its intensity, and this accounts in a certain measure for that seductive charm which every one has remarked, and which may have come from his mother, *la belle Anglaise.* He has certainly inherited from her many of the solid qualities of the Englishman, which, added to the more showy, taking French manners, have enabled him to attain his present position.

I take him to be a formidable factor in modern political progress, the lever by which France is to make a step forward, the motive power which has started those immense but inert masses, so slow to move, but, once in motion, resistless as a mountain torrent. He has always consistently sympathised with and supported the just claims of those who have not against those who have; not in a revolutionary way, but in a moderate, conciliatory spirit, which would, if properly put into practice, do much to bridge over the great gulf which has always separated the classes and the masses.

Boulanger's many personal qualities would certainly not have placed him where he is so rapidly had the country possessed one really good man. But France has never before been delivered up to a collection of such miserable mediocrities, nonentities, and place-hunters as have been ruining the country for so many years. What would become of England were we to dismiss the competent, tried men, who generally govern the country, and hand over its destinies to the tender mercies of a Cabinet composed of assistant-veterinary surgeons, briefless barristers, disqualified solicitors, patientless doctors, and bankrupt company promoters?

It is very probable that Britain would cease to rule the waves, that Britons would soon become slaves, and that this fair isle would fall an easy prey to any ambitious imitator of William the Conqueror who could muster a few ships, a few men, and a little money.

Such, however, is the position in which France now finds herself; and this amply explains the people's anxiety to entrust their interests to a strong man, capable of introducing a little order into this chaotic Government.

The *vox populi* being about to make itself heard, we can only await with patience the decision of an oracle against which there is no appeal, and terminate our remarks with ???

Before concluding, I should like to thank the obliging authors who have furnished me with certain information concerning the General's youthful days and early military career, as well as others who have been good enough to supplement, here and there, a rather treacherous memory.

F. TURNER.

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cacher à personne.

Croyez, cher Monsieur Turner, à l'expression de mes meilleurs sentiments,

Gal Boulanger

Londres, 10 7bre 89.

Cher monsieur Burnier,

Je vous accorde très-volontiers l'autorisation que vous me demandez.

Quoique je ne sache nullement ce que vous allez dire dans votre livre, je vous connais assez pour être certain que vous ne direz que la stricte vérité sur ce que vous avez vu depuis votre arrivée en France en 1886.

Cela me suffit. Car, ainsi que vous le savez vous n'avez jamais eu, mes amis et moi, rien à

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

IT would, we think, be difficult to name a public man, in any country in the world, about whom so much has been said, sung, and written as about the General. His name has become a "familar household word" all over the civilized world; his portraits have been sold and distributed by millions, and his memoirs by hundreds of thousands.

One could not go into any cottage, even in the most remote village in France, without finding a portrait of the popular General. Men have confidence in the energy and *sang-froid* displayed in his resolute face; women admire him for his handsome looks and dashing, soldierly bearing; whilst young fellows gaze with noble emulation, and a sort of pride upon his general's uniform, and the numerous decorations sparkling on his breast, so many tokens of the wounds he has received in the defence of his country. They are proud of this son of the people, who is, after all, one of themselves.

It must not however be supposed that the poor alone display his portrait in their cottages; the aristocracy and the middle classes of all political creeds are equally eager to have a photograph or etching of the popular idol, and display it in their sumptuous drawing-rooms or comfortable parlours with as much pride as the cottager on his walls. We know several Opportunist deputies, bitterly opposed to Boulanger, who are obliged to tolerate the

hated General's portrait in their houses, because it pleases their wives and daughters; and they find it a difficult and dangerous thing to do anything in the matter, for the slightest opposition on their part would only result in making the ladies more "Boulangist" than ever.

Another most astounding thing is the wonderful gift the General has of pleasing and charming all sorts and conditions of men, and women too; the good genius which presided at his birth, and still lovingly watches over his destinies, having endowed him with a most magnificent gift, that of a wonderfully sympathetic nature. This precious quality is really the basis of his character, and one of his greatest forces, accounting to a certain extent for the preponderant *rôle* he is now playing, and the marvellous success of his entire career.

Thanks to this seductive, almost magnetic charm, he is equally welcome and at home in the magnificent *salons* of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, as he is in an improvized banqueting hall in some populous centre, amidst a thousand "horny-handed sons of toil," who beam with delight at the sight of him, and cheer him to the echo as long as he stays amongst them. There is certainly something magical in his manner, which charms all hearts, and subdues even his most obdurate opponents. During the election tours he made through France, it was calculated that every shake of the hand he gave, and we dare not say how many thousands he distributed, was equal to a vote; and this was really not far from the truth, as was amply proved by the wonderful majorities obtained both in Paris and the provinces.

"What," it may be asked, "was the original cause of this immense popularity?"

We cannot of course pretend to enumerate all the various causes which gradually transformed what was at first merely a popular idol, destined, people said, to a speedy disappearance, into a solid

political force, capable of concentrating, and that with a purely Republican programme, the best elements of the numerous and widely divergent political parties which have been dividing France during the last hundred years.

Nevertheless, we do not hesitate to say the initial force was in the man himself. From his earliest days Boulanger has always shown himself to be a sharp, shrewd, and determined character, full of ambition, always ready and able to advise and lead his fellows. Another purely personal gift, very precious in France, where politeness is pushed to an extent unknown anywhere else, is his winning manner, the sympathetic, cordial attitude he assumes towards every one who approaches him, the consummate tact and smartness with which he immediately puts visitors of every rank and condition at their ease.

Remarking on this to him one day, he explained to us that from the moment he entered the army, he had made a point of receiving every one, listening to every one, and, if possible, learning something from every one. Whoever fully realizes the importance of this trait in his character will readily understand why Boulanger always finds, without the slightest hesitation or trouble, the right thing to say to every one.

Another reason for his great and lasting popularity is the wonderful and genuine solicitude he has always felt and displayed for the common soldier, the little "*Piou-Piou*," or Tommy Atkins of the French army. From the time he left the Military School at St. Cyr to join his regiment in Algeria, he has always taken the greatest interest in the wants, the welfare, and the personal comfort of his men. The latter were not slow to recognise and appreciate this, so that Boulanger rapidly acquired a reputation amongst the soldiers as the bravest of officers under fire, and the kindest of men in camp. As to his brother officers, they were equally fond of him, admiring him for his pluck, his dashing

appearance, and, above all, for his merry, lighthearted, easy-going temper, which helped them to spend many an agreeable day when otherwise they would all have been consumed with what they call "*le spleen*" in their barracks, far from the various sights and amusements so dear to the average French officer.

Later on, when Boulanger began to rise in his profession, still working hard to perfect himself in everything an officer ought to know, he developed other brilliant qualities, which led to his being noticed and appreciated by the authorities. Promotion was not slow to come, and when it did Boulanger was always prepared to take full advantage of it, and to fulfil in the most thorough manner whatever new duties were imposed on him. He gave ample proof of this whilst occupying the post of Director of Infantry at the War Office, and when he was appointed Commander-in-chief of the army of occupation in Tunis. But the precise moment when he was enabled to show of what metal he was made was when he became Minister of War.

There he gave such striking proofs of his energy, ability, and tact, that even his enemies—and he naturally had a great many—were obliged to admit that the country had not had such a Minister of War for many a long year. He infused the whole War Office staff and the entire army with a feverish, well-directed zeal which quickly bore fruit. Abuses were swept away; good ideas, which had been inquired into and then pigeonholed by previous ministers, were unearthed and put into execution. The army suddenly felt a pride in itself, and a confidence in its strength, which it had never experienced since the fatal war of 1870, and the general public, kept constantly informed by the press of the great improvements effected by the young and energetic general, were unanimous in proclaiming that the country at last possessed a Minister of War worthy of a first-class military nation, and the army a chief in which it could fully confide.

The culminating point of this universal, really national enthusiasm was reached on the 14th of July, 1886, when the General, mounted on a magnificent black charger, reviewed the troops at Longchamps before an immense crowd of Parisians, mad with joy at the superb display made by their magnificent army, and the dignified, martial bearing of its handsome and popular chief. From that day forth he was greeted with the name of "Général Espérance," which name was really deserved, for the nation had never before held its head so high since the disastrous war with Germany.

In the course of this work we shall have occasion to give a full, detailed account of the various improvements effected by the General during his term of office, which was somewhat short; but we venture to dwell here on the moral effects produced throughout what has never ceased to be a sensitive and chivalrous nation by Boulanger's patriotic and firm attitude, his faith in the future of his country, and his determination to make a bold stand against all foes, from whatever quarter they might come. No previous Minister having produced the same results, or assumed the same attitude, we may fairly claim that the effects we are alluding to were solely due to Boulanger's personal character, qualities, and efforts.

Though from this time forth other and purely foreign elements contributed to strengthen his position, yet his personal influence remained, and always must remain, the principal factor of his popularity. When the Government then in power saw what immense progress Boulanger was making in the affections of the people, and especially of the Parisians, ever ready to idolize a dashing, handsome, successful soldier, whilst they themselves were daily losing ground, they determined to cut short his career by giving him command of an army corps in some obscure and distant provincial district.

But to their dismay they found it was too late, Boulanger having become a power in the land. Every newspaper in the kingdom was engaged either in sounding his praises, or—what was equally useful to him—systematically denying his ability, and roundly abusing him. Villemer, the popular song writer, inspired by the General's popularity and personal qualities, had written several touching and patriotic songs, representing him as the certain deliverer of Alsace and Lorraine, the saviour of France, the hope of the nation, tired of the eighteen years' persecution and plunder to which they had been subjected, yearning to see their beloved country resume its lawful rank in the European concert. The Patriotic League, numbering some 250,000 members, scattered over the whole country, had learned to look upon the General as the only man capable of helping them to carry through their programme; and last, but not least, Paris and the provinces were ringing with that marvellously exciting, tuneful, and inspiring song, "*En revenant de la Revue.*"

It seemed at that time as if the heart, brain, and strength of the whole country were working with might and main for one man; and such was really the case, for, rightly or wrongly, the majority of Frenchmen thought, and still think, that Boulanger is the only man who can restore to France her former splendour, prosperity, and *prestige.*

Nothing, then, could have been more logical than the extraordinary scenes which took place the day of the General's departure from Paris for Clermont-Ferrand, when two hundred thousand citizens and patriots crowded to the Lyons railway station and acclaimed him, as no French statesman, not even Gambetta, had ever been acclaimed before.

"Il reviendra! Il reviendra!" such was the universal cry.

They cheered, they laid down on the rails in front of the engine, they clambered up to any giddy height, provided it gave them

a sight of the popular soldier; and there is not the slightest doubt that, had Boulanger wished it, he might have marched in triumph to the Elysée, followed by the 200,000 partisans at the railway station, and probably another 100,000, who would have joined the ranks *en route.*

But Boulanger, a soldier and a general, knew his duty was to leave for Clermont-Ferrand, and he determined to obey orders. He might have provoked a *coup d'état* by the people themselves, who were ready and anxious to do the work; but with a prudence for which every one did not then give him full credit, not even his own friends, he firmly refused, saying he would leave everything to the will of the people, clearly expressed by the only legal arm, the voting paper. All along the line, enthusiastic crowds came to cheer him, and his entry into Clermont-Ferrand was the final stage of a triumphal, almost regal progress.

Far from lessening or impairing his popularity, his exile to Clermont-Ferrand only tended to increase and strengthen it, the public having immediately looked upon Boulanger as a martyr, suffering for the popular cause. His name became better known than ever, and penetrated across the frontier to every corner of the earth. Two or three of the General's friends, wishing to prove the real extent of his popularity, denied by the Government organs, determined to nominate him in the department of Dordogne. The General had literally a walk over, though the electors were well aware he was a candidate against his will, and that, moreover, he could not take his seat in the House, even should he be elected.

In addition to this, a young author, full of confidence in Boulanger's future, commenced a popular and exhaustive biography of the General, which was bought with the greatest eagerness all over the country. In this work he gave the most minutely romantic details of Boulanger's early days and subsequent career,

placing the man's character before the public in the most striking light. Moreover, no newspaper could now afford to let a day pass without devoting a certain space to Boulanger, the hero of the day, the idol of the nation, Bismarck's bugbear, and Ferry's constant fear.

When the Government in their wisdom, after a ridiculous parody of a court-martial, composed of Boulanger's enemies, decided to place the General on the reserve list, fondly hoping that, deprived of his brilliant military attributes, he would quickly sink into oblivion, they were doomed to another and most disheartening surprise.

His friends, Count Dillon, Rochefort, Naquet, Turquet, Laguerre, and others, immediately constituted themselves into a Committee of Protestation, of which the General was appointed president. On the 15th of April following, the largest and most important department in France elected the persecuted General by the most extraordinary, crushing majority ever known in all the annals of French political history.

The day Boulanger went to the Chamber of Deputies, to represent his electors and develop the programme he had always consistently supported, and which was fully approved of by his constituents, the majority of the members present, foaming with rage, and mad with impotent spite, conducted themselves more like a collection of wild beasts than an assembly of representatives of the people. This was another and clear proof of the fear he had inspired in the minds of the Opportunist and Government clique, led by the sinister author of the iniquitous religious persecution, and the disastrous and costly Tonquin expedition.

Boulanger's calm, dignified behaviour on this occasion led a distinguished Englishman who was present to say, that if the General only remained as cool and collected before the nation's

enemies as he had before his own, the French people were not far wrong in putting their confidence in him.

His attitude during this memorable *séance* rallied around him a great many who had previously held aloof, and the subsequent events, his duel with Floquet, the hero of the *Vive la Pologne, Monsieur!* adventure, his election in three departments on the same day, his magnificent triumph in Paris, his exile,—all these things have contributed to his popularity by keeping public attention constantly fixed on him, thus strengthening the general idea that he is the coming man, destined to play a part, and no unimportant one either, in the future history of the French nation.

There are other elements which have contributed to Boulanger's popularity, and account for his present position as chief of a powerful party. Trade has long been in a drooping state, no one is earning any money; naturally the people blame the Government for this state of things, and hope that if the General came into power he would immediately cause trade to revive. All the Panama shareholders, and their name is legion, have the blindest faith in Boulanger, and are convinced he would contrive to extricate them from the difficulties into which they have been drawn by those whose mission it was to defend their interests.

Again, the pensioners consider they have been hardly treated by each succeeding Government; Boulanger received them, listened to their complaints with the utmost attention, fully sympathised with them, and assured them that should it ever be in his power he would be most happy to help them. They are now Boulangists to a man, and vote and work for him with unflagging energy and devotion, fully convinced that the General's entry into office would open up a new era for the humble heroes who, after fighting their country's battles in all parts of the world, find themselves neglected in their old age by an ungrateful Government.

All this is perhaps very unreasonable, and these good people

may possibly be wrong in supposing that one man could ever find time to effect so many reforms; but they have this idea so firmly rooted in their minds, that nothing can persuade them that Boulanger is not the man who is destined to work as much good for the country as the previous Governments have done harm.

The General is the first to acknowledge that, though he has many devoted, talented friends in all parts of the country, yet his worst enemies have constantly been his most useful allies: first, by what they have done against him; then by what they have done in their own interests; and, lastly, by what they have neglected to do for the country. The presence of certain hopelessly unpopular men in the councils of the French nation has done as much to render the General popular as all the efforts that have been made on his behalf by his friends.

Another point which has struck and astonished impartial observers is, that even when Boulanger or his friends have made what were generally supposed to be mistakes in tactics, these mistakes have always turned, by some inexplicable means, entirely in his favour. This curious fact deserves special attention, because it has inspired in the minds of the masses the superstitious idea that Boulanger, like the kings of old, "can do no wrong," that whatever step he takes is sure to come right in the end, that he is, in fact, Fortune's favourite, a predestined man, and that they can with the utmost confidence leave their fate in his hands. We once heard a French workman of Lille say, "I don't care a button: he can do what he likes and be what he likes; he's the man for me!" And this is the popular sentiment throughout the country.

We will endeavour in the following pages to give a clear and impartial account of the career of this remarkable Anglo-Frenchman, omitting nothing that may be likely to throw a light on his character, or to elucidate a somewhat complicated phase of French contemporary politics. The general elections are now imminent,

and the mighty struggle between the Opportunists, led by Monsieur Jules Ferry, who enjoys the unenviable reputation of being the most unpopular man in France, and the National party, of which General Boulanger is the popular and honoured chief, must soon take place.

"The man of Tonkin" will then receive a startling and disagreeable reminder of the old adage, slightly altered, "He who, instead of fighting, runs away, must live to fight another day."

We have no doubt there are thousands of Englishmen, lovers of fair play, and admirers of a people bravely fighting for the liberties they themselves have long possessed, who will wish success to the plucky General and the millions of honest and patriotic citizens of all parties who are striving for the establishment of a strong, stable, and truly democratic Government, which shall adequately respond to the aspirations of the majority of the nation.

CHAPTER II.

BOULANGER'S YOUTHFUL DAYS.

GEORGES ERNEST JEAN MARIE BOULANGER was born at Rennes, in Brittany, on the 29th of April, 1837, and has consequently entered on his fifty-third year.

As there appears to be a certain misunderstanding and doubt as to the exact place of his birth, some authorities averring that he was born in Brighton, we think it well, in order to dissipate any doubt that may still exist on the subject, to give a translation of the official certificate of birth, as it appears on the books of the Registrar of births and deaths at Rennes.

"On the 2nd day of May, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven, at one o'clock in the afternoon, there appeared before us, Louis le Prieur, Deputy-Mayor and Registrar of Births and Deaths, Monsieur Ernest Jean Rosalie Boulanger, Notary at the Royal Court of Rennes, aged thirty-one years, residing Rue de Bourbon, who presented to us a child of the male sex, born at his house at the Calliorne, in this parish, on the 29th of April last, at a quarter past eight in the morning, son of the said Boulanger and of Marie Anne Webb Griffith, his wife, aged twenty-six years, to which child he gave the names of Georges Ernest Jean Marie, in the presence of M. Dominique Joseph Jacquet, Captain and Paymaster of the 5th Artillery Regiment, aged forty-seven

years, residing Rue du Champ de Mars, and of M. Emile Nicolas Boullemer, Warden of the Forests, aged thirty-three years, residing Rue de l'Horloge. The father and witnesses signed the present certificate after reading the same.

[Signed] JEAN BOULANGER. JACQUET.
E. BOULLEMER. LE PRIEUR
[Deputy Mayor]."

M. Boulanger, senior, was a solicitor at Rennes ; but he sold his practice, which he did not much care for, and accepted an appointment in the local County Insurance Company. Later on he resigned his position in this company, and settled down at Ville d'Avray, near Paris, where he died in May, 1884, at the green old age of eighty-five.

Madame Boulanger, the General's mother, is still living, and is, we may mention, a native of "gallant little Wales." She resides with her brother and his daughter, Mr. and Miss Griffith, in a pretty set of rooms in a house situated in the Avenue de Breteuil, near the Hôtel des Invalides. Although an octogenarian, she is quite hale and hearty, as may be judged from the fact that she can still walk up the three flights of stairs leading to her apartments, without needing to take a rest on the way. Whenever her brother or his devoted and affectionate daughter press her to take a little repose on the landing, she invariably declines, adding with a smile, —"That's all very well for old folks."

She is an extremely warm-hearted, affectionate woman, and is at the same time gifted with a fund of that strong common sense which has always been one of the characteristics of our English women. She it was who superintended her son's education, and who named him after the great American statesman and patriot George Washington, rightly thinking that no brighter example could be offered a boy starting in life than that of the man of

whom America is so justly proud. The General has always felt and still feels the warmest affection for his mother; in fact, we may say his love for her increases as she advances in age, and not a day passes without his calling on her when he is in Paris, or writing to her when he is absent. However busy he may be, whatever pressing calls he may have on his time, he always contrives to find an interval to call and see her, or to write a few lines to her; and the first letter he reads in the morning is the one from his mother.

At Rennes the family circle was a modest one; but not withstanding that, their house was always considered a *rendezvous* for the poor of the district, who had at length learned to look upon Madame Boulanger as their good fairy. She was, in fact, kind and charitable to a fault, and her husband was very much like her in that respect. To tell the truth, this was the very honourable reason which led them to dispose of the practice, which had been carried on in a kindly, old-fashioned way which few modern lawyers would think of adopting.

George Boulanger was placed, when still very young, at a boarding-school in the neighbourhood of Rennes, where he distinguished himself by his precocity and quickness in his studies, and at the same time by his reckless, turbulent temper. His mother could, it is true, do what she liked with him, but those who were entrusted with his education were not always so fortunate. However, though of a somewhat headstrong disposition, he was a really good-hearted little fellow, as may be seen by the following letter, which he wrote to his father in 1842, that is to say when he was about fiye years old.

"DEAR FATHER,—

They tell me you have had an accident with your horse. As it is your birthday, I send you my best wishes, and embrace

this opportunity to tell you I am very happy to know you have escaped the danger you were exposed to by this wicked horse. I shall feel frightened at the thought that I have been on the point of losing my good papa.

"I am working as well as I can, so that you may be satisfied with me, and in order that you may send me to the Polytechnic School. I hope one day to be Marshal of France, and to have the Cross of Honour. I embrace you with all my heart,

"Your little son who loves you very much.

"GEORGES BOULANGER."

M. Boulanger, senior, was just recovering from a fall from his horse when his son wrote him this letter, which Madame Boulanger, the General's mother, has carefully preserved in her collection of maternal souvenirs, with a thousand other trifles, which she values beyond anything else in the world.

It will be seen that the youthful Boulanger was not at all modest in his aspirations, and that he was not wanting, even at that early age, in a certain ambition. "Marshal of France and the Cross of Honour!"

How came he to have such a strong taste for the military profession? It would appear from what we have been able to gather from him in our conversations, that it was by reading "The Campaigns of the First Empire." None of his relations belonged to the army, and his father's profession was not one likely to inspire any martial ardour in his son's breast. He had, it is true, the example of the General Boulanger who, during the French Revolution, had command of the Paris National Guard, after the resignation of Santerre, and who resigned this post in order to join the army of the East, then engaged in repulsing the invading enemy.

As a curious instance of how history repeats itself, we may

mention there was also a Count Arthur Dillon concerned in the revolutionary movement at the same time as this General Boulanger, and that they both perished by the guillotine.

It is, of course, morally certain that neither the General nor his friend will end their days in this uncomfortable way. Their two former namesakes died victims of Republican violence before they could terminate their patriotic task, whilst there is every reason to believe that the modern General Boulanger and Count Dillon, more fortunate, will remain, and finally triumph over that group of sorry politicians who, by their dishonesty, mismanagement, and incapacity, have brought France to the very verge of ruin.

As we have already said, when he was yet a child, Boulanger developed the strongest taste for everything military, and this vocation declared itself in the most irresistible way. He was barely out of short clothes before he asked his mother whether he could not go and join the army. As he had just witnessed a review of the troops then stationed at Rennes, they asked him what regiment he would like to join.

"The general's regiment!" replied the budding warrior, he having been specially attracted by the officers of the staff, with their brilliant uniforms and dashing chargers. His mother has not forgotten these charming, interesting details, and it was with a certain emotion, very easy to understand, that she recalled these facts and related them to us.

"George has always been a soldier," she will tell you with pardonable pride. "He has always had his head full of everything relating to military matters, 'wars, rumours of wars, and moving accidents by flood and field,' as our great Shakespeare says. As he could not very well dispose of real soldiers, he amused himself by delivering regular pitched battles with his schoolfellows."

We have heard a great many interesting anecdotes referring to

and illustrating this particular phase of his character, but will content ourselves with relating one which refers to the period he spent in an English school at Brighton.

M. and Madame Boulanger brought their son George over to England to visit the Great Exhibition, held in Hyde Park, in 1851. They remained, in fact, some considerable time in this country, chiefly at Brighton, with Mrs. Griffith, an aunt by the mother's side. This lady's husband had recently met his death under very mysterious and dramatic circumstances. As he was going home one night with a rather large sum on him, which he had just drawn in a distant locality, he was attacked by several masked men, who robbed him of everything he had. Whilst struggling to defend himself, he snatched the mask from the face of one of his assailants. The latter, finding he was recognised, drew his pistol and shot the unfortunate Mr. Griffith through the heart, killing him instantly.

When George Boulanger arrived at Brighton, the Griffith affair had become quite a *cause célèbre*, and nothing else was talked about all over the country. The Government offered a reward of £2,000, but without discovering the perpetrator of the foul deed; Mr. Griffith's cowardly murderer consequently remained unpunished.

Widow Griffith's house was quite revolutionized by the arrival of young Boulanger, and she was soon obliged to send him to school with his two young cousins, her sons. The English schoolboys, who had no idea what a tough customer they had to deal with, determined to see of what stuff he was made, and at once commenced a formidable persecution against the future "*brav' général*." Of course they immediately adorned him with the flattering nickname of "Froggy," to which Boulanger, nothing daunted, retorted by dubbing his amiable schoolfellows a set of "English pigs."

Things went on like this for some time, until they at last came to a crisis. Boulanger at first thought of engaging in a stand up fight with the most pertinacious of his persecutors, and settle the question in that way. But, fortunately, another and far more brilliant idea occurred to him, an idea which was, after all, quite natural, when we consider the strongly military bent of his mind. He determined to enter into a defensive and offensive alliance with his two young cousins, thus forestalling by a number of years the famous triple alliance which has lately engaged the attention of the political world.

The next day, the three allies, under the command of the pugnacious and daring Boulanger, swooped down on those of their persecutors who happened to be in the playground, and threw them into a neighbouring pond, which, very fortunately, was not at all deep. When the schoolmaster, hastily sent for, arrived on the scene of action, the battle of the "English pigs" and the "French frogs" was just drawing to a close, Boulanger having at that moment thrown the last "pig" into the pond. It is needless to add that this exploit, which formed no part of the school's educational programme, necessitated the immediate removal of the enterprising Boulanger from the scene of his earliest tactical triumph.

Soon after his return to France he displayed a strong liking for horses, and riding became the ruling passion of the hour with him. His uncle, Arthur Griffith, a thorough sportsman, well versed in everything relating to horses, contributed not a little to the formation and development of his nephew's taste for this manly exercise, a knowledge of which is indispensable to every military man. The first time he mounted a horse, he tells us, was at the Fernando Circus, one Saturday afternoon. This was a red-letter day in the life of our young hero, who thus attained the height of his youthful ambition, never dreaming that later on he would again mount in

triumph, on a dashing black charger, at the head of the French army, as its popular and honoured chief. No; the young student, who had never, up to that time, mounted any charger but those furnished by the proprietors of *chevaux de bois* or "merry-go-rounds," was beside himself with joy on finding himself astride a real horse, with a real saddle. From that day forth he paid the greatest attention to his studies, in order not to miss his weekly treat of a Saturday afternoon's ride.

His father soon afterwards sent him to college at Nantes, where he worked very hard, and passed all his examinations in a most brilliant manner. We must confess however, that if he gave every satisfaction as regards his studies, his conduct was not always all that could be desired. On leaving college he entered an institution kept by a Monsieur Barthe, at Versailles, a sort of educational hothouse, intended to develop and force the budding talents of young gentlemen preparing their Bachelor of Arts examination or for passing into one of the great Government schools. There young Boulanger gave proof of a remarkable power for work, and a real talent for assimilation, which enabled him to attack and digest the most difficult subjects without the slightest trouble or effort.

It was in this institution that Boulanger first met Count Arthur Dillon, "*son meilleur ami*," as he always calls him. The Count was preparing for the military profession, and they both entered St. Cyr School at the same time.

For certain reasons of a private nature, Boulanger was not sent to the Polytechnic School, but was admitted at the very early age of seventeen to St. Cyr, the French Sandhurst, a purely military school, more suitable to a young man with strong military tastes than the mixed, almost entirely civilian, Polytechnic School. He had not been there long before his character became somewhat modified; he was more pliable, less reckless and self-willed, and

besides, he had no reason to complain, after all, of the treatment he received, though the discipline maintained amongst the "premier soldiers of France" was then rather severe.

One day, when off duty outside the school, he had an affair which nearly resulted in very grave consequences. A young civilian having insulted him in a *café*, Boulanger instantly replied by knocking him down before all the people. There was, of course, a duel arranged on the spot; but the young St. Cyrian's adversary having failed to present himself at the appointed time, the combat did not take place, much to the disappointment of the military cadet, who was not only thirsting for his enemy's blood, but was moreover yearning to engage in his first duel, and thus take the first step on that path of glory which every French soldier hopes to follow.

Soon after this affair, George Boulanger fell very ill, an epidemic of scarlet fever having broken out in the military school. All the cadets who were not stricken down with the fever were sent home, and they passed their examination at the Polytechnic School. Madame Boulanger immediately came to the school to nurse her sick son, of whom she was fonder than ever, and by dint of careful attention and loving care she contrived to bring him round again.

This grave illness was recalled to General Boulanger about four years ago, whilst he was Minister of War. The following are the facts, as they were reported in the newspapers of the period:

"The Minister of War visited the military school at St. Cyr yesterday. The entire staff attached to the establishment were present with the General during the inspection. The senior nurse, a poor old nun nearly eighty years old, confined to her bed by rheumatic pains, was so anxious to see the General, of whom she had heard so much, that she prevailed on her friends to carry her down to the ground floor, where she hoped to catch sight of him as

he passed. At last he came in sight, followed by the principal authorities belonging to the school. When he passed the old woman, she called out to him with the privileged familiarity of a nurse who had followed the army through the war with an ambulance:

"'Ah! and so you are the Minister of War?'

"'Yes,' replied the General, with an affable smile.

"'But that can't be; you don't look more than thirty-five.'

"'Anyhow, I was here in 1855.'

"'Really! What's your name?'

"'Boulanger.'

"'Boulanger, Boulanger! Let me see,' said the old woman, who seemed to be trying to remember something which did not readily occur to her. 'Ah! I remember now, a young St. Cyrian, as mischievous as the devil, and as pretty as a girl. I rather think I do know you, and your mother as well. You were within an inch of dying of that attack of scarlet fever you had here. Ah! we had a deal of trouble to pull you through. You may flatter yourself on having a really good mother. She's still alive, isn't she?'

"'Yes, madame; and in the best of health, I am happy to say.'

"'She is luckier than I am, for I am now good for nothing. Speak to her about me; you'll see she will remember all about me.'

"'Certainly she has not forgotten you, and I shall not forget you either.'

"And the General, shaking hands with the delighted old nun, continued his round of inspection, not a little touched by this unexpected meeting."

CHAPTER III.

BOULANGER'S FIRST CAMPAIGN IN ALGERIA.

GEORGE BOULANGER passed out of St. Cyr School in 1856, at the age of nineteen, with the rank of sub-lieutenant, and immediately joined the 1st Regiment of Turcos, then stationed at Blidah, in Algeria. He had chosen this regiment in which to commence his military career, having been advised to do so by General Cler, a great friend of his father, who was killed at the battle of Magenta.

Algeria was, at that time, an admirable war school for dashing, ambitious young officers like Boulanger. There was, it is true, a fair share of danger; but this was, to him, an additional attraction, and possessed moreover the advantage of creating quick promotion for those who had the good fortune to survive.

Strange to say, Boulanger, in all his sea trips, has never had a really good passage, and no one suffers more cruelly than he does from *mal de mer*. When he left for Algiers, the boat was forced, owing to heavy weather, to put in at Port Vendres, where they stopped two days. But fortunately (and throughout his whole career we shall continually have occasion to remark how singularly constant this usually fickle dame has remained to him) there was an opera *troupe* on board, so that his stay in port, far from being a source of annoyance and *ennui*, was transformed into a "real good time," as our American cousins say.

At last the time came to make the personal acquaintance of

the famous "Turcos" about which Boulanger had heard and read so much. At that time they were all natives, and these brave and hardy veterans, who had gone all through the Crimea, had never set eyes on any sub-lieutenants "manufactured" at St. Cyr. "Ah! ah!" said the Turcos, in sarcastic tones, "Mother St. Cyr has hatched these three chickens in one brood."

The "chickens" in question were Boulanger, Brault, and Juffé.

Boulanger had not been in the regiment long before he received the *sobriquet* of "*Le Petit Français.*" This name, which was given the young officer at first on account of his slight stature, soon became, owing to his subsequent conduct, a highly flattering distinction that more than one of his brother officers secretly envied him.

The battalion did not remain long at Blidah, but received orders to proceed to Tizi-Ouzou, to strengthen the French out-posts on the borders of Great Kabylia. There the young sub-lieutenant began to learn his profession in earnest, for in that district, far from any civilized centre, life was very rough indeed. Every evening the Kabyles came and paid depredatory visits to the soldiers camped in this *bordj*, a sort of improvized military village. It was quite impossible to pursue them at night, and the French troops were obliged to protect themselves as well as they could against their incessant attacks. When they did contrive to surprise any of the Kabyles, they made them prisoners, if possible, and invariably shot them the next morning at daybreak, without the slightest mercy, and "*pour encourager les autres.*" They would then leave their bodies exposed to the attacks of vultures and beasts of prey, so common in the neighbourhood. This had the advantage of terrifying all nocturnal, native prowlers, but the disadvantage of infecting the *bordj*.

Boulanger soon became quite familiar with every species of danger; not a night passed without his being disturbed by some

incident, and on one occasion he was awakened in a very curious, amusing way. His alarum, placed just over the bed, suddenly fell down on his head. Hastily jumping up to strike a light and stop the terrible din caused by the bell, he discovered, to his great amusement, that the unfortunate *réveil-matin* had just received a bullet from a Kabyle gun, and was ringing its death ring. The next morning the young sub-lieutenant repaired his tent as well as he could, for it was literally riddled with bullets, and the following night he arranged a sort of barricade round his head with a havresac and other similar articles.

But the time for terrible and sanguinary reprisals came at last; the campaign was commenced and pursued by the French with the utmost vigour. They no longer confined their attention to defending themselves in a corner of the desert against man and beast, but resolutely determined to act on the defensive, and drive the insurgents back into their mountain retreats.

We can easily picture the emotion felt by the young officer of twenty who was about to receive his baptism of fire on the heights of these African mountains, veritable eagles' nests, said to be absolutely inaccessible. A little incident proved however that, besides a soldier's bravery, the "Petit Français" also possessed a kind and tender heart.

One night young Boulanger, whilst going his rounds to all the sentry posts, observed a woman glide furtively into the camp. On making inquiries, he discovered she was the *fiancée* of one of the natives who had been taken prisoner the previous evening. Ordering the girl to be arrested and brought before him, the young officer inquired the reason of her visit to the French camp. The trembling girl, a handsome specimen of native beauty, not more than seventeen years old, told her story in a very frank and courageous way when once she saw with what kindness she was being treated. Her *fiancé*, quite a young man, had allowed

himself to be led by imprudent friends into taking part in the resistance against the French troops. When she heard he had been taken prisoner, she determined to rejoin him and share his lot, whatever it might be. Boulanger knew that if they remained they would meet the fate of all prisoners, and be shot at daybreak the next morning. Seized with pity for the two unfortunate lovers, who were so fond of each other that they had resolved to live or die together, he determined to set them free, they having both sworn, with tears in their eyes and by all they held sacred, to remain perfectly quiet during the whole campaign.

Having watched them leave the camp hand-in-hand, weeping with joy and gratitude on finding themselves free, George Boulanger returned to his tent, with that satisfied, contented feeling we always experience after having performed a good action. From a strictly military, disciplinarian point of view, he was, no doubt, very wrong; but he escaped with a severe reprimand from Major Pechot, the officer commanding the battalion.

On leaving Tizi-Ouzou, the Turcos marched through a succession of deserted and devastated tracts of country; the natives, marvellously entrenched in their mountains, allowed the French troops to advance, and then fired at them at close quarters, or crushed them with immense blocks of granite. On the 24th of May, 1857, at four o'clock in the morning, that is to say, before the intolerable heat of the day had set in, the assault was commenced. They cut a way through the ravines, the high grass, and the brushwood without knowing exactly where they were going to. Most of the officers were so thoroughly exhausted, that they were obliged to get their men to carry them. Only one of them walked, or rather, ran forward, scaling the rocky ledges with marvellous agility, astonishing the very Turcos themselves.

"*Le Petit Français!*" they exclaimed in tones of admiration.

Yes; it was the "*Petit Français*," and he was soon destined to furnish them with other motives for admiration. The struggle between the French troops and the native hordes now became very fierce; pieces of cannon were hauled up the mountain side, amidst a shower of bullets, the heights were stormed at the point of the bayonet, and the villages captured and burnt. But like "Excelsior" they had to mount still higher, and the slopes became steeper than ever. The Kabyles, taking advantage of the rugged nature of the ground, were able to arrest the progress of the French column at every moment. The men under Boulanger's orders marched along gaily, delighted to see themselves commanded in such an energetic way by one whom they had hitherto looked upon as a mere child.

Though his hands and knees were bleeding profusely, and he had received two rather troublesome wounds, he still insisted on remaining at the head of his little band of gallant Turcos. Just above them, the Kabyle women, more infuriated than the men, ground their teeth, and showed their fists, yelling out the most bitter insults against the "Christian dogs." But the dauntless Turcos marched on, disdaining to reply to their insults, or to the fusilade which was decimating them.

All at once the rocks forming a natural tower on the summit of the mountain moved at their base, lost their balance, and rolled down with a fearful crash on the French soldiers, who were literally buried beneath this unexpected and terrible avalanche. Boulanger, just as calm as if on parade, contrived to avoid the falling masses of granite, he hardly knew how, and thus found himself safe and sound after the passage of the rocks, which continuing their fearful headlong descent, ravaged everywhere they passed, until they arrived on the plains. A Colonel was killed at Boulanger's side, but this did not in the least damp the ardour of the intrepid band of Turcos, the lions of the Algerian army. The Kabyles, harassed

by a dashing, irresistible bayonet charge, led by Boulanger, were at length dislodged and their positions conquered.

We regret that the plan of this work will not allow us to enlarge on this remarkable war, a war of Titans, carried to a victorious issue under very trying circumstances with unparalleled dash and pluck. We will merely say that Sub-Lieutenant Boulanger was always conspicuous for his bravery and scorn of fatigue and danger, and that his meritorious conduct was fully recognised and favourably commented on by his superiors.

The army soon afterwards received orders to construct a road from Tizi-Ouzou to Souk-el-Arba, the extreme limit of the French operations. They worked hard at this road from the 28th of May to the 24th of June, and immediately afterwards laid the first stone of Fort Napoleon, now known as National Fort.

Marshal Randon, addressing the Turco battalion to which Boulanger belonged, said,—

"There's your *bordj*."

The place certainly did not look very inviting, but they were obliged to stay there and make the best of it. Moreover, they were not destined to remain idle for long, for the native tribes resumed an offensive attitude, and the campaign was opened up again.

At Ichriden the struggle was very keen, and there was a veritable massacre of French officers. Boulanger was, as usual, fortunate enough to escape. The French were obliged to pursue the natives across the rough jungle, and into the gorges overshadowed by immense boulders. At last two companies, one of them being Boulanger's, received orders to turn the enemy's flank, and attack them in the rear as soon as the rest of the army should have dislodged them. This extremely delicate and difficult movement succeeded admirably. Boulanger's conduct during the celebrated night march which led to the complete defeat of the

insurgents was as skilful as it had been courageous during the struggle. A native fortune-teller, called Fatma, was known to have been the principal instigator, the Joan of Arc of this campaign of resistance, and the French officers had got to look upon her as an ideal creature. When she was brought in a prisoner, they were all anxious to get a sight of this ideal beauty; but, alas! when she raised her veil, they found her to be an old and frightfully ugly sorceress. This last disappointment marked the close of the campaign.

Sub-Lieutenant Boulanger, mentioned in despatches, was proposed for the cross of the Legion of Honour. He was just twenty. From that time forth the Turcos recognised him as a chief, and were ready to go anywhere and do anything with a leader in whom they had the utmost confidence.

On the 5th of July, 1857, the column forming the Army of Kabylia having been broken up, Boulanger's battalion left for Algiers, and was enthusiastically cheered at the review held on the 15th of August in the capital city of Algeria. The battalion then returned to Blidah, and they there resumed their ordinary garrison life, which naturally appeared terribly monotonous after the stirring adventures they had just gone through.

The officers, deprived of the various pleasures to be enjoyed at Algiers, could not console themselves for their departure from the gay and animated city, which was, after all, only about thirty-five miles from Blidah. This distance is not really very great, especially to young fellows anxious for amusement. They held a secret consultation, and the result was, that instead of going to bed in the evening, they would quietly order their horses and gallop off. At Douira, about half-way between Blidah and Algiers, they were able to change horses, and never stopped afterwards until they reached Algiers, where they were not slow to avail themselves of the few hours they had for amusement. When the time arrived

to return, they would gallop off again, take their own horses at Douira, and arrive in barracks at Blidah just before roll-call in the morning. They had thus ridden some seventy miles for a few hours' pleasure. These escapades, which were not, of course, in strict accordance with military discipline, served to show, at least, that the young officers were not wanting in pluck or power of endurance. It is needless to remark that Boulanger was always one of the ringleaders of these midnight excursions.

General Yusuf, who was very indulgent with the officers, and who was particularly fond of "*Le Petit Français*," never failed to invite them to the costume balls which he gave from time to time, and it can be imagined with what eagerness the young officers accepted every invitation to these brilliant and enjoyable *fêtes*.

The winter of 1857 passed in this way, but suddenly orders were received to march to Aumale, a military outpost in the heart of Africa, with the desert for horizon. Never had the officers been quartered in such a place. An old Marseilles woman, who kept a sort of primitive restaurant, the only one in the place, replied to any complaints that might be made,—

"My 'lads,' if you don't like my cooking, you can go opposite; I am not afraid of competition."

And she waved her hand in the direction of the great Sahara, a sandy, dreary waste as far as the eye could reach. As hers was the only restaurant in the place, they were obliged either to content themselves with her doubtful eggs and horrible, mysterious dishes, or to go back to the regimental mess, which was, if possible, a trifle worse.

To while away the time, they hunted the wild boar in the Dira, and Boulanger, who was even then a splendid horseman, excelled in this exciting sport. His untiring good humour and gaiety were never better appreciated by his fellow officers and men than they were at Aumale, where life was intolerably dull and colourless.

When there was a skirmish, they quite looked upon it as a *fête*, and there was rejoicing throughout the camp when they received a visit from some stray lion, prowling around the *bordj* in search of something or somebody to devour.

After a stay of six months at this exhilarating station, the Turcos received orders to return to Fort Napoleon, which is now the principal fortified outpost on the Great Kabylian frontier. There they made the acquaintance of the officers of a line regiment, quartered in huts. Life was not very agreeable there, but still it was not so horribly dull as at Aumale. They embraced the slightest pretext for organizing a little amusement; when a commissariat convoy passed through on its way to some distant outpost, they would give them a splendid reception, followed by a ball. Unfortunately, it was not as in London, where dancing ladies are in the majority, for there were some *sixty* officers, and only *two* ladies, and they were far from being pretty!

But the news soon spread that France was about to take Italy's part against Austria, and the Algerian officers learned with delight that the authorities had called for a battalion of volunteers from each regiment. At Fort Napoleon every one wanted to go away, and Boulanger was one of the first to volunteer. They naturally selected the most robust and hardy men from each regiment, and the majority of them were six feet high. The "*Petit Français*" looked a mere child beside these magnificent specimens of the native race, but it was wonderful to see how they loved and obeyed him. There never had been such a regiment; the men, wild with warlike enthusiasm, hardly gave themselves time to eat, drink, or rest whilst on the march to Algiers, so eager were they to resume active service.

At Algiers the military transport authorities quickly embarked the detachment of gallant Turcos; so that one glorious evening in April, Boulanger left Algeria, the scene of so many daring exploits,

GENERAL BOULANGER.

to commence his first campaign on European ground, and, strange to say, to draw his sword in defence of a foreign nation.

The alliance just concluded between Italy, for whom France has done so much, and Germany, the latter's hereditary foe, has clearly proved how culpable Napoleon was to allow private sentiment to prevail in national politics, and furnishes another striking illustration of the well-known saying, that the burden of gratitude is just as intolerable to nations as to individuals.

CHAPTER IV.

BOULANGER'S SUBSEQUENT MILITARY CAREER.

THE Turcos had received orders to proceed to Culoz, a town lying in the district between Lyons and Geneva, and there constitute an entrenched camp for Bourbaki. But there was a surprise in store for them; for, on arriving in Toulon harbour, the captain of the transport received orders to allow no one to land.

A naval officer handed him a sealed letter to be opened when out at sea, and this letter was found to contain formal orders to disembark the troops at Genoa. Of course, the Turcos were delighted, but the civilians who had left Algiers expecting to be landed at Toulon were loud in their expressions of indignation. As to the ladies on board, they kept up, as may be imagined, a chorus of shrill complaints and threats all the way to Genoa.

At this latter place, the French troops were received with transports of joy, the enthusiasm being all the greater from the fact that an Austrian general with a large force was marching on the city, and would certainly have made the inhabitants pay a very heavy ransom, and perhaps sacked the place in case of refusal to pay.

The Turcos marched at the head of the column, and at Sale, on the banks of the river Tanaro, they witnessed a review of the Austrian troops which was being held on the opposite side of the river. At that period, the distance was too great to allow of any

effectual firing between the two enemies, but with the modern, perfected, long-range rifles, it would have been the easiest thing in the world. The Turcos were again received with enthusiasm at Novarre, which had just been wrested from the Austrians after a desperate struggle.

Boulanger and his men had not had time to close their eyes when orders were received to cross the Tessin over a bridge of boats. They had to march in Indian file, and it was near this spot they fought the battle of Robecchetto, better known under the name of the Battle of Turbigo. General de la Motterouge gave the Turcos orders to carry the village; the gallant little regiment, which had outstripped the rest of the column, rushed forward through the maize, shouting their war-cry, "Ahou! Ahou! Ataou!"

Boulanger was at the head of his company, which, in common with the rest of the French troops, was assailed by a perfect storm of bullets and grapeshot. The Austrians, thoroughly sheltered behind their intrenchments, were enabled to shoot the French down with the utmost surety and without exposing themselves in any way to the enemy's return fire. Four French officers and a number of men fell, mortally wounded. At last the Turcos, driven to desperation, determined to dislodge the Austrians from their intrenched positions by a furious onslaught at the point of the bayonet—their favourite mode of combat.

A scene of frightful carnage ensued, Boulanger, who was somewhat in advance of his men, received a ball just beneath the heart from an Austrian soldier who had aimed at him at a few paces. This soldier had hardly fired before he was lying, a dead man, pierced by a score or more of French bayonets. A sergeant laid the wounded sub-lieutenant in a ravine, and returned to his place at the head of his men. The enemy's *mitrailleuse* was still vomiting forth its death-dealing pellets, and the falling maize and branches

gradually covered up the trench in which the wounded officer was lying.

The French victory was complete, but evening had come on before they had the good fortune to find Boulanger, who was lying literally buried beneath the thick masses of maize, straw, and foliage. He was quite insensible, and had lost an enormous quantity of blood. The ball had entered his chest, just below the heart, and had passed out by the back, just grazing the spine. Not one in a thousand ever recovers from such a wound as this, and the brave Turcos, who saw his desperate state, were overcome with grief at the thought of losing their favourite officer, "*Le Petit Français.*" They carried him to the ambulance which had been hastily organized at Robecchetto, and there the doctor attended to his wound, without even undressing him. When Boulanger recovered consciousness, he scribbled a few lines to be sent to his parents, and then, thoroughly exhausted by the loss of blood, fainted away again. When he came to himself, he was surprised to find himself strapped on a mule's back, on a sort of stretcher, with another wounded officer beside him. The heat was intolerable, and he suffered intensely, the maize straws having penetrated the wound. He had to travel fifteen miles in this uncomfortable way before reaching Novarre, where there was a regular hospital.

To make matters worse, the mule on which Boulanger was mounted began to kick. The unfortunate officer, quite unable to bear his agony any longer, implored the official in charge of the convoy to give him the *coup de grâce.* Naturally the official declined to do him this favour, and, after seven hours of this cruel mode of travelling, they arrived at Novarre, and Boulanger there received all the attention necessitated by his desperate condition. He was then stricken down with fever, and was for several days quite delirious, during which time he was incessantly calling for his mother.

His mother, that noble and courageous woman, was already at his bedside! On receiving her wounded son's letter, she hastily left Nantes, dressed in a white muslin gown, trimmed with green satin, that being the fashionable attire of the period! And this was how she crossed France, rushing from one train to another, barely stopping to take any food or rest. On arriving at Mont Cenis, the sharp mountain air was too strong for her, and she had a severe attack of bronchitis, to which she had no time to attend. At last she arrived, more dead than alive, in Italy, where the greatest disorder was then reigning. The grief-stricken but courageous woman found it quite impossible to obtain any news of her son; she visited the hospitals, the ambulances, and even the cemeteries of the neighbouring villages, but could find no trace of the wounded officer.

She went as far as Milan, making inquiries as well as she could, for, not knowing the language of the country, she had the greatest difficulty in making herself understood. By a piece of good luck, she made the acquaintance, in a diligence, of a high Italian official and his wife, who were on their way to Novarre. Seeing Madame Boulanger in great trouble, and concluding from her appearance that she was French, they addressed her in that language, and offered their services. She learned from them that there were a great many wounded French officers under treatment in the hospital at Novarre, and they were even kind enough to accompany her there.

At the hospital the porter handed Madame Boulanger the list of patients, saying,—

"There's the book, look for yourself."

This was a terrible shock to her, for opposite each name there was some such remark as "*wounded*," "*amputated*," or "*dead*." And this sinister word "*dead*" occurred very frequently. At last she found her son's name.

"Boulanger [Georges], *dangerously wounded.*"

Soon afterwards she was conducted to her son's bedside, where she learned to her great grief that the doctor had given him up for lost. From that moment she remained at the hospital, watching over him night and day, determined to do everything in her power to save her darling son.

Madame Boulanger piously preserved her son's uniform just as it was the day he entered the hospital, and the proud mother has allowed us the privilege of seeing it. She has carefully folded the whole in a small box, labelled: "George's uniform, riddled with grapeshot." When she showed us this interesting relic, now thirty years old, Madame Boulanger remarked with pardonable pride,—

"He wasn't wounded in the back, was he?"

And this was clearly proved, for the passage of the ball, very wide in the chest, is very small at the back of the tunic, the ball having remained in the cloth.

When the wounded man opened his eyes and saw his mother sitting at his bed-side, he was so delighted that he felt, as he said, almost well again. He was naturally greatly elated by his nomination as Knight of the Legion of Honour, the officers and men of his regiment having subscribed to present him with a handsome cross. They came themselves to present it, and Madame Boulanger, greatly affected, placed it on his breast, just above his wound. This, together with his mother's tender nursing, produced a marvellous effect, for he was soon well enough to be transferred to a friend's house, where he rapidly became convalescent. After the Legion of Honour he received the Italian order of St. Maurice and Lazarus, and the medal commemorative of the Italian campaign. He was then the youngest Knight of the Legion of Honour in the French army, and was decorated three times before attaining his majority.

The Italian campaign was, after a rapid series of victories,

brought to an abrupt close by the peace of Villafranca. The Italians, rather ungrateful for what the French had done for them, were literally furious on seeing hostilities brought to an end, for it disappointed their dearest hopes, which were directed towards the acquisition of Venice and the Adriatic. They gave vent to their anger in an odious manner, quite unworthy of a civilized nation. At Turin, where Boulanger happened to be passing through, the wounded French soldiers were insulted by the inhabitants, who even went so far as to stone them. The French brigade which had just arrived in Turin, and which remained there, was obliged to take up arms to protect the victims of Italian independence—menaced by the Italians! As soon as the troops came up, the noisy brawlers disappeared as if by enchantment.

Sub-Lieutenant Boulanger and his wounded comrades received a full apology from the Grand Master of the Order of Maurice and Lazarus. This Italian dignitary characterized his countrymen's conduct as most cowardly and dastardly, even going so far as to call them a "set of pigs." As will be seen, the Italian medal had its reverse side!

Boulanger, hardly convalescent, returned to Paris, where he remained under treatment until the latter part of 1859. We may here mention a detail which is not generally known, and of which the General's numerous enemies across the channel are at liberty to make what use they please.

The Empress Eugénie, then in the very zenith of her beauty, at the very acme of her power as the consort of a powerful and popular emperor, having heard of the exploits of the young officer of Turcos, determined to pay him a visit whilst on his sick-bed. Boulanger's mother was there, and it was she who had the honour of receiving the beautiful empress. The latter complimented her on her son's bravery, and assured her that "*Le Petit Français*" had become quite legendary amongst the Turcos,

who were loudly calling for their young chief to go back and take his place amongst them. We quote this anecdote merely to prove that the future general, who had entered the Army without the slightest influence, was far from being unknown at the moment of attaining his majority. Such a very young officer cannot have earned three decorations and been thrice wounded on the field of battle without attracting a certain amount of public attention. How many officers are there who, having had to depend solely on their merit, can show such a record as this? We should have to go back to Hoche and Marceau, both children of the people, like Boulanger, to find a similar case.

Any one else but the young sub-lieutenant would have preferred to remain in France and enjoy the fruits of his exceptional position. But Boulanger was longing to return to Africa, almost before he was really cured. Strange to say, nearly a year after receiving his wound, he had an abscess in the region of the spine, during which a piece of the blue cloth of his tunic came out. It had entered his body with the bullet, and come out through his back, after having slowly worked its way through. It is needless to add that Madame Boulanger carefully treasures up this singular souvenir of the terrible wound which nearly deprived her of her son.

Before leaving Paris, Boulanger was arrested under most amusing circumstances. A policeman, seeing him pass, dressed in *mufti* and wearing the ribbon of the Legion of Honour at his button-hole, could not believe that this "bit of a boy" had the right to wear the badge of the order. He therefore arrested him and marched him off to the police-station, intending to charge him with illegally wearing the insignia of the National Order, a punishable offence in France. Of course, as soon as they arrived at the superintendent's office, the matter was explained, and the latter bowed the precocious warrior out with profuse apologies, to which he added his personal congratulations.

Boulanger's former comrades had returned to Algeria, where there was some heavy fighting going on. Unable to remain idle any longer, he determined to return to Blidah and resume his regimental duties. Colonel Archinard, who had taken a great liking to him, prevented him risking his life too recklessly, and insisted on him taking a little rest, which he greatly needed.

About this time Boulanger was promoted, in accordance with strict regulation custom, not by any means as a favour, to the rank of lieutenant. His commission was dated the 28th of March, 1860. He was just twenty-two years old, and had already served three years. Soon afterwards the young lieutenant rejoined his regiment, where he met with a very enthusiastic reception. In their simple and frank admiration his men still called him "*Le Petit Français.*"

The season was a very bad one, and the huts were sometimes blown down in the middle of the night, so that they were obliged to repair the disaster under a pouring rain. Whilst the men were loud in their complaints, Boulanger always laughed and treated the matter as a huge joke, and soon got his men to look upon the affair in the same light. All clever French officers treat their men in this way, and do not, on that account, lose caste in the eyes of the men; on the contrary, they frequently gain the latter's friendship, which is often very valuable in certain cases. Boulanger remained at Fort Napoleon until September, 1860, when a fresh commotion was caused amongst the Turcos, each regiment having been requested to furnish two companies of volunteers for Cochin China.

Naturally, Boulanger was one of the first to volunteer, but, owing to the state of his health, the medical authorities refused to pass him. Then, for the first time in his life, he intrigued with his chiefs. The idea of remaining quietly in Africa whilst his comrades were fighting in the Far East seemed to him to be a crying

injustice and a real calamity, and he manœuvred so well that they at last accepted him. He declared with calm audacity that he had his parents' consent, which was, we are bound to admit, the reverse of the truth, Madame Boulanger and her husband being quite ignorant of the way in which their son was exploiting their pretended consent. The declaration Boulanger made to Colonel Archinard was certainly not quite correct: but, after all, there was no real harm done.

"If they had not let me go," said he to his friend Juffé, "I had firmly resolved to conceal myself in the hold and go as a stowaway."

Fortunately, he had not to resort to such a stratagem, and on the 15th of October, 1861, he was officially embarked as a military passenger. A month previous to this the detachment to which he belonged, formed at Blidah, marched to Boufarick, and on the 18th of the same month the gallant Turcos arrived at the gate of Isly, Algiers. The other troops arrived at Algiers from Constantine and elsewhere, and on the 21st of September the battalion was formed and placed under the command of Major Pietri, of the 2nd Turcos.

As we have said, Boulanger embarked on the 15th of October, 1861, about 6 p.m., on board an old paddle steamer, which weighed anchor and slowly steamed out of the harbour, the weather being anything but favourable. The unfortunate lieutenant had reckoned too far on his strength, for he fell seriously ill on board, and his comrades really thought he was soon destined to furnish a meal to the Mediterranean fish. His wound, which had never really closed, added to his sufferings. He was obliged to wear a bandage, surrounded by a roll of gutta percha, intended to prevent the lung from protruding and forming a sort of hernia at the chest. But this apparatus was continually shifting, and caused him fearful torture. However, he endured the pain as well

as he could, and quite overthrew the predictions of the doctor, who told him every morning he certainly could not last the day. This rather inhuman Esculapius even wanted to land him *en route*, but the obstinate lieutenant formally and energetically refused to be disembarked, saying that he intended to follow the flag. At this the doctor announced that he declined to accept any further responsibility in the matter, but still he continued to attend on him with the greatest care, for at heart he could not help admiring the young officer's courage.

On the 23rd of October, they landed at Alexandria, and it was quite time for Boulanger they did so. He remained in bed for some days, and this did him a great deal of good. The Nile having overflowed, and the railway between Alexandria and Cairo being under water, they were obliged to stay some time in the former city. The officers took advantage of their stay in Egypt to familiarize themselves with this interesting country, rich in souvenirs of famous Frenchmen who had visited it at different periods—Buonaparte, Kléber, and the thousands of veterans who had followed them in their Egyptian expeditions. On the 27th of October, the Turcos went up the Nile in boats kindly placed at their disposal by the Viceroy. This was a delightful journey for all of them; the native troops, pleased to find themselves amidst people of their own race, fraternized with the Arabs and danced with the Almees whenever they happened to make a stay at any town or village. The next day they came in sight of the Pyramids, and on the 29th they arrived at Cairo, where, unfortunately, they had no time to stay, much as they longed to visit the beautiful city. The same evening they took the train for Suez, where they arrived the next morning at six o'clock. The canal was far from being finished, and Port Said scarcely existed as a town at that time. The Turcos were at once embarked on the *Jura*, a lumbering old screw-steamer which was destined to play them

many a trick during their interminable voyage from Suez to Saigon. They were kept waiting at the former town for various curious things, including the band intended for Rear-Admiral Bonnard's ship. They did not therefore get away from there till the 12th of November; the next day they sighted Sinai, and about four o'clock they entered the Red Sea. The heat was something intense, and the unfortunate passengers could hardly breathe. Of course, there were no appliances of any sort to mitigate the heat, and the *Jura* resembled in no way those splendid Peninsular and Oriental boats which enable our Indian officers and their families to perform the same journey with such ease, speed, and comfort.

To make matters worse, there was found to be something wrong with the screw, the *Jura* was obliged to steam at a very slow rate, and they even had to haul the propeller up on deck every day to repair its damaged fans. On arriving in sight of Ceylon, it broke down altogether, so that they were obliged to run under sail, and on the 13th of December they arrived at Point de Galle, where they were obliged to lie to.

All this time, Annam, where they were going to fight, was up in arms, and the French reinforcements were urgently needed. The Turcos remained some time at Colombo, where they found an English regiment, the 50th Foot. The officers and soldiers of the two nations soon became acquainted, and the utmost cordiality reigned between them throughout their stay in the city. Boulanger and his friends were enabled to enjoy, amongst other novelties, an elephant ride, under domes of verdure of an alarming height, and altogether this stay did him a deal of good, for he was not yet thoroughly well. He had the good fortune to receive news from Cochin China by the officers of the steamer *Echo*, which was bringing Admiral Charner back to France. They informed him that the Annamite insurrection was at its height,

and that the fever was killing off the unfortunate French soldiers by hundreds. This first piece of news comforted Boulanger somewhat, for he was afraid they would arrive after all the fighting was over. But he was, nevertheless, very impatient.

"At the speed we are going now," said he, "we shall find all our enemies dead of old age when we arrive."

On the 19th of December, they left Ceylon, after prolonged *adieux* with the English officers, with whom they were very sorry to part. The engineers had repaired the *Jura's* screw so effectually that it broke as soon as they got out to sea, and the boiler also went wrong about the same time.

We cannot relate in detail the various other mishaps the unfortunate ship met with, but will merely mention that after having had ten days very heavy weather they emerged from that only to find that they had to encounter a violent cyclone, during which all the passengers were battened down 'tween decks. The *cantinière*, a handsome woman belonging to Nantes, was actually bound hand and foot, she having, in her fright, tried to jump overboard. Fortunately Boulanger, who happened to be near her at the time, was able to prevent her executing this rash design. It was then pitch dark, but the frequent and vivid flashes of lightning served to light up the horrible scene.

Suddenly it was discovered that the ship had sprung a leak, and all hands were at once put to the pumps. Fortunately the wind dropped about this time, the cyclone having spent itself. Boulanger, still suffering from sea-sickness, remained in his cabin. His wound had opened again during the tempest, and he had lost a considerable quantity of blood. All the sympathies of these men, who had just been snatched from the very jaws of death, were centred on the young officer, who was never left alone, always having some of his friends around him to keep him company. At last this dreary and dangerous voyage came to

an end. On the 26th of January, 1862, they arrived at Cape Saint-Jacques, at the mouth of Saigon River, after a passage which had lasted just eleven weeks.

Rear-Admiral Bonnard, Governor of Cochin-China, came down the river to meet them. When he arrived on board, Major Pietri spoke to him of a young officer who had been ill during the whole voyage, but who was nevertheless delighted to have arrived at last within a fair distance of the scene of operations. The Admiral, having sent for Boulanger, congratulated him on his courage and constancy, and invited him to lunch with him.

On the 29th of the same month, they steamed up the river to Saigon, and there disembarked, going into camp at the Banians, about a mile and a half from Saigon. The climate soon began to do its deadly work: fever, dysentery, and sunstroke carried off numerous victims every day. Boulanger, speaking to us about the Cochin-China climate, said: "On arrival, you have the choice between fever and dysentery. The sharpest ones take both together, and then they are not so dangerous. However, a great many succumb all the same."

We cannot give a complete account of this long and murderous campaign in the Far East, during which the Spanish native troops rivalled in bravery with the French soldiers in their endeavour to crush the Annamite insurrection. We may simply say once for all that Boulanger took a brilliant part in the numerous and terrible engagements fought in that pestilential country. He left the Banians on the 10th of February, and embarked on the gun-boat No. 12 to operate in the direction of Tay-Ninh, on the Cambodgian frontier. Besides the Annamites, they had to fight against the tigers, which literally infested these regions. They also had a deal of trouble with the elephants, trained for war by the Annamites, and even with the crocodiles. These different animals, when they contrived to kill them, served as food for the

Turcos. Boulanger found that elephant's flesh was not bad, that crocodile tasted like stale lobster, saturated with musk, and that tiger resembled veal in a rather "high" state.

We will not refer to the battles which preceded the taking of Trai-Dang, where Boulanger was again seriously wounded. He it was who commanded at this rapid and victorious attack. Without giving the enemy, composed of Annamites, Cambodgians, and pirates, time to see where they were, he dashed on them with drawn sword, followed by his faithful Turcos with fixed bayonets. There was a terrible struggle, during which the impetuous lieutenant was made prisoner for a moment. He stood at bay, surrounded by a group of Annamites, whom he kept at a distance with his pistols. At last, disarmed and thrown down, he had his thigh run through by a poisoned lance, which naturally caused a serious wound. The end of the lance was garnished with two bent cramps, which entered deeply into the flesh. By the greatest good fortune, the Turcos rushed up at this moment, and, massacring every one of the Annamites around Boulanger, saved him from a certain death. Then ensued a scene of slaughter such as the young officer had never seen before, for the Turcos are more like demons than men when they once get into action, using their bayonets at close quarters.

After the taking of Trai-Dang, Boulanger received the attention that the gravity of his wound rendered necessary. They cauterized it inside, to prevent the poison from acting, an operation which caused him the most excruciating pain. At last his wound was dressed, and he was placed on a small, short-legged native horse. During this campaign they never saw anything like an ambulance; the wounded were obliged to follow the column, or become the prey of the tigers or the natives, the latter being the more ferocious of the two. How many unfortunate fellows were thus mutilated, burnt, or hung by the vindictive and inhuman Annamites!

One can hardly realize the painful position Boulanger was in during this expedition: under a burning sun, on horseback, and wounded, he was yet obliged to direct his men and lead them into action! Few men could have withstood this, and one who has done so can fairly boast of an iron constitution, indomitable pluck, and to have been born under a lucky star.

Boulanger's company did not return to Saigon until the 18th of April, after the capture of the citadel of Winh-Luong. The young officer was then sent to Cholen, where he caught a sun-stroke. He there met with Dr. Rochette, who attended him with the utmost devotion, managed to bring him out of danger once more, and insisted on the invalid being sent back to France. But Boulanger manœuvred so well that he contrived to stay in the country. His captain, Delastre de Valdufresne, who could not support the climate, having resigned his commission, Boulanger, in recognition of his brilliant conduct, was appointed to succeed him. His commission was dated July 21st, 1862, and he was just twenty-five years old! During the rainy season, the young captain devoted all his attention to administrative work, and was not long before he distinguished himself in this branch as he had done in the field. He was, in fact, a thorough "all-round" soldier, ignorant of nothing relating to his profession.

At the beginning of 1863, the French recommenced the campaign against the Annamites, who had shown signs of resuming offensive operations. We need not here refer to any other engagement but that of the capture of the citadel of Go-Cong, of which Boulanger was appointed governor. After the decisive victories gained by the French at Winh-Toi, Dongson, Binh-Long, etc., the credit of which is fairly due to Boulanger, he having always led the attacking column, they fought a decisive battle against the Annamites, who were entrenched in the only strong position they had left. To reach them, the French had to

cross a muddy waste, under a burning sun. A great many Turcos sank down in the mud, and Boulanger would certainly have shared their fate had it not been for the devoted conduct of his comrade Juffé, a magnificent fellow, over six feet high, who picked him up insensible, and carried him on his shoulders to *terra firma*. The capture of the citadel of Go-Cong brought the expedition to a close, and this dangerous post was confided to the Turcos until 1864. Boulanger, the only captain in the two companies, exercised the command of this fort with rare energy and success.

Out of three hundred Turcos who left Algeria in 1861, only seventy survived!

Captain Boulanger, who had fought side by side with the Spaniards, received the Order of Isabella the Catholic. He was therefore destined to return home with a fresh wound and a fresh decoration. On the 25th of January, an epidemic having broken out amongst the troops at Go-Cong, the Turcos received orders to return to Saigon. They were soon sent back to Europe; and on the 25th of May, Boulanger embarked on the *Sarthe*, and made the run from Saigon to Suez in a month. *En route* they took the *Duperré* in tow, and assisted the English corvette the *Panther* off a sandbank. At Moka they fired on the Egyptians, killing several of them, and two seamen belonging to the *Sarthe* were also wounded. These incidents served to enliven what is generally a dreary passage, and afforded the passengers matter for conversation. The ship steamed on at a frightful speed, and people expected every moment to see the boilers burst. On arriving at Suez, they understood from what danger they had escaped. This *tour de force* was an act of pure folly on the part of the captain of the *Sarthe*, who, in fact, died of brain fever shortly after his arrival at Suez. The Turcos having been landed sooner than the French transport authorities expected, they were obliged to stay some time in Egypt. Their dress and general appearance

were not very brilliant: they were thin, lantern-jawed, and yellow, and their clothes were in a very ragged state. Notwithstanding this, they were cordially received and handsomely treated by the cosmopolitan and native population of Suez. The officers were invited to visit the Viceroy's palace, the brilliant exterior of which only served to conceal its shockingly dirty state inside.

Swarms of mosquitoes attacked the travellers, and several were so badly bitten and had scratched themselves so forcibly that they were obliged to have certain limbs amputated. These intolerable pests followed them with touching constancy all the way to Alexandria, where they made a short stay. After a few days' rest, they embarked for Toulon, and Boulanger again made the acquaintance of his implacable enemy, the *mal de mer*. Nothing could give an idea of the joy felt by the survivors of the Cochin-China expedition when they came in sight of the coast of France. During the disembarking of the troops there was a scene of indescribable enthusiasm: every one cheered, and there were heartfelt cries of "*Vive la France!*" set up all along the route. The Turcos were soon sent to rejoin their regiments in Algeria, whilst the five officers on sick-leave waited in vain for their permit.

Captain Boulanger, who was anxious to see his parents and surprise them, was literally beside himself with impatience. He went to call on General le Rouxeau de Rosencoat, who received him with great cordiality, and advised him to go with his comrades to Marseilles to see the general in command of the district. They took the next train to Marseilles, and called on General d'Aurelle de Paladine. Boulanger, who was chosen as spokesman, commenced,—

"General——"

"Fifteen days under arrest!" roared the irate General, pointing to the door.

The fact is, the young captain and his comrades were not in regulation costume to call on a general, for they were wearing blue flannel suits, on which there were various unsightly patches. They had the best of excuses: having just returned from the colonies, they had not had time to replenish their wardrobe. But the General, choking with indignation, would listen to nothing in the shape of an explanation.

"Fifteen days under arrest!" he roared again, in a terrible passion; "I never saw such an accoutrement!"

They were obliged to obey, and to go away without offering any explanation. Boulanger returned to General de Rosencoat at Toulon, and related his story. The general laughed heartily and gave him a note for the terrible D'Aurelle de Paladine.

The young men returned to Marseilles, but not with the same eagerness with which they had performed the journey the first time. Boulanger, deputed by his comrades, went in to the general, who was smoking a cigarette over his coffee in the garden. After having read the letter from General de Rosencoat, he jumped up from his chair, exclaiming,—

"What! you have just returned from Saigon, and you said nothing about it? I can now understand why you are in that curious costume. Why didn't you tell me this at first?"

Boulanger did not, of course, tell the General he had not given him a chance of doing so, but simply asked him to sign their sick-leave papers and to cancel the punishment.

"Certainly," said the General, immediately doing everything that was required.

It will thus be seen that General Ferron was not the first to put Boulanger under arrest. But D'Aurelle was a valiant soldier, though somewhat rough in manner, and knew how to repair a mistake; whilst the other was—well, not quite the same.

Boulanger's family then resided at Ville d'Avray, a charming

spot just outside Paris. Balzac lived there, and there it was that Gambetta met his death in such a mysterious, dramatic way. We can imagine how the young traveller was received and affectionately scolded for staying away so long.

"Ah, here you are at last!" said his father. "I hope you are going to stay now you are here? You've had enough of Asia and Africa; a little stay in Europe will do you good, my boy."

A new tie was soon to induce the young captain to remain at home, and that was his marriage. He was married in Paris, on the 21st of February, 1865, to his cousin, Miss Renouard, daughter of an honourable merchant of that city. They have two daughters, Hélène and Marcelle. The latter, it will be remembered, married Captain Driant last year, and the former, who is still single, lives with her mother.

Boulanger was twenty-seven years old when he changed with a captain of the 53rd Regiment of the line, then stationed in Paris. About a month after his marriage, he took up his residence at Vitry, that being close to Ivry Fort, where his regiment was then stationed. In September he went to Lyons to relieve a captain who was going away on leave of absence. His health was then so bad that his friends tried to persuade him to leave the army, but he could not make up his mind to do so, notwithstanding his wound, which was still exceedingly painful. General Urich, who had always appreciated Boulanger at his real value, proposed him as captain-instructor at the Military School at St. Cyr. General Abadie d'Audrein, who was then in command of the school, promised him the first vacancy which should occur. He was appointed to this post, which requires first-class technical abilities, on the 1st of January, 1867. He was not quite thirty!

"The instructing captains at St. Cyr Military School," says Monsieur Barbou, the talented biographer of modern French celebrities, "are always chosen and appointed by the Minister of

War himself, on account of the importance of their duties. On their teaching and the clearness of their methods depends the future of the army. It is during their first lessons that the young cadets confided to them learn to respect discipline and how to obey, so that they may know how to command later on. From the two years spent at the school springs the love of the profession, which alone can make good officers."

Captain Boulanger remained at this post from 1867 to 1870, and has left amongst all his pupils a lasting and affectionate memory. All those who have been under his orders remember his kindness and *bonhomie:* when off duty he was almost like one of themselves. But on duty his manner changed entirely: the slightest negligence, the slightest forgetfulness on the part of officers or cadets, was immediately punished with the greatest severity. The best and most attentive cadets in the school did not get through their year without a fair amount of punishment.

"We are kept well in hand," the St. Cyrians would say; "but we have a good man." And they liked that; they understood it was all for their good, and that this was, after all, the best system to adopt. They were, moreover, proud of belonging to the smartest and best-drilled division in the school. The new arrivals, the "*melons*" as they are called, could not help gazing with a certain amount of admiration on the four decorations which their captain displayed on his handsome uniform on special field-days.

Encouraged by his kind manner when off duty, they would sometimes venture to ask him to tell them something about his campaigns, which he always did with the greatest readiness, causing many a hearty laugh by the numerous droll stories he told them of the various adventures he had met with in all parts of the world.

Boulanger's ambition was to have his division at the top of the list in the school at the yearly examination, and this he usually

managed to contrive. He ordered the hardest of fatigue duties, the most unheard-of marches out; but the cadets performed everything in a most willing way, and so well understood the utility of such exercises that a certain number of the most zealous ones would frequently sacrifice a holiday for the pleasure of doing a little extra battalion drill, which was at that time a very complicated exercise. This may seem incredible to those who know military cadets, but it is none the less true.

The captain was, as we have said, a model instructor. He communicated his real love for study to each one of them, and knew how to inspire that zeal without which no really good work is done. Besides, what led him to be respected and liked was the just appreciation he felt for all the young men he had under him. He knew how to appreciate the intelligence, willingness, aptitude, and industry of each one of them, and did not despair even of the most incapable amongst them. In short, they were all delighted to obey him, in spite of his severity. Those who were at the school in 1870 will remember as long as they live the last morning's exercise Captain Boulanger gave them.

The annual inspection was just then going on at the school.

One morning, General de Cissey, the Inspector-general, ordered the battalion to form into a square. He then advanced, accompanied by the principal officers of the school, and, amid a deep silence, announced the declaration of war between France and Germany, at the same time informing them that all the cadets would at once be appointed sub-lieutenants. Only those who witnessed this stirring scene could describe the explosion of joy which followed this announcement, the enthusiastic cheers which rent the air.

During the following week they had to hasten forward the cadets' drill; but with what ardour and eagerness they all did their work! Each one was anxious to do his best, all were burning to leave the

school in order to take their places on the field of battle in defence of their country.

The Sunday following the inspection there was a full parade, the last before the departure for the frontier. At two o'clock, the battalion was under arms in the courtyard. The captain on duty was Boulanger, who therefore took command of the battalion. Unsheathing his sword, he called out, "Attention!" and instead of continuing as he had hitherto done by saying "Battalion, forward!" he cried out "Officers, forward!"

The cadets who were present on this memorable occasion are unanimous in stating the immense effect produced by these words on their young and ardent comrades, who were positively electrified by this unexpected and flattering appellation.

Captain Boulanger left the school after the declaration of war, with the rank of major. It has frequently been insinuated that it was owing to the 1870 war that he held this position in the army at such an early age, but nothing could be farther from the truth. Boulanger was appointed major when the Franco-German War broke out; and was a lieutenant-colonel at the age of thirty-three, having been promoted normally, regularly, and solely on account of the services he had rendered to his country and which we have enumerated in the preceding pages. It is true that the captains promoted at the same time as he was had been waiting for some considerable time, and he had only seen eight years' service; but it has been seen how his personal merit had led to this rapid promotion, with which the war had nothing to do, and which he amply justified by later and equally brilliant services both as a general and as Minister of War.

CHAPTER V.

THE TERRIBLE YEAR [1870].

ON the 15th of July, 1870, Boulanger was, as we have said, appointed major, his battalion, the 28th, being then at Nantes. He shortly afterwards received orders to join his regiment in that city, whilst his comrades were about the same time drafted off to Metz. But the disastrous events which occurred immediately afterwards led to Boulanger being incorporated in the 13th Regiment of the line, which he accompanied as far as Mezières. He escaped with Vinoy's corps from the Sedan disaster and returned to the capital, which he was destined to defend later on, and under the walls of which he was fated to receive yet another wound.

We need not dwell at any great length on this disastrous campaign, but will merely say that Boulanger thoroughly maintained his reputation throughout the whole period of the war.

According to his invariable practice, he was always at the head of his men, ever ready to inspire them with confidence in themselves, and to set them the best of examples. His regiment was justly celebrated throughout the army for its splendid appearance: his men always went into action as bright and smart as if they were on parade. What a contrast with certain other regiments of the Army of Paris, which were frequently demoralized, and

presented a very careless, unsoldierly appearance! During the first engagements in the neighbourhood of the beleaguered city, Boulanger so distinguished himself, that the authorities were not long before they acknowledged his merit by entrusting him with the command of the 114th Regiment of the line. His commission as lieutenant-colonel was dated November the 9th, 1870. In order to teach his men a becoming scorn of danger, he would frequently walk along the advanced posts, fully exposed to the fire of the Prussian sharpshooters, and laughingly called this taking his "constitutional"!

The first affair in which Boulanger was called upon to exercise an important command was at the battle of Champigny, when he took his place at the head of the battalion which led the attack. His horse was almost immediately killed under him by an obus. Springing to his feet, and feeling sure of being followed by his men, he dashed forward, only stopping now and again to say a comforting, encouraging word to those fighting by his side. They quickly carried Thuillier Woods, and made twenty Prussians prisoners in an ambuscade. At the famous charge on the plateau of Coeuilly, he led the forlorn hope three different times, whilst his men, although completely crushed by superior numbers, fought with indomitable courage.

During this action Boulanger received a ball in the shoulder, but did not allow this to stop him; determined not to quit the field, he retained his command to the last, supported by two soldiers. When night came on, he organized a good camping ground for his soldiers, visited the ambulances, and stoutly refused to have his wound dressed until all his men had been attended to.

He afterwards turned his attention to the decorations to be bestowed on the heroes of this memorable struggle, desiring that the dead men should be decorated first, in order that a souvenir of their heroism might replace them in their mourning families.

This seems to us to be a beautiful thought, worthy of a gallant soldier!

Three days after this, Boulanger, placed at the rear of the army with his regiment, again distinguished himself by the energy and presence of mind with which he arrested and rallied the French troops, surprised and thrown into the greatest confusion by the Prussian cohorts. But the French army was irrevocably condemned, and had to forego all the benefits of that memorable *sortie* from Paris, and return to the interior of the bombarded and famished city. This movement, favoured by a thick fog, was executed without the slightest difficulty, and in perfect order, the enemy doing nothing to disturb the troops.

The French army having re-crossed the Marne, the 114th Regiment was sent to St. Maur camp, where Lieutenant-Colonel Boulanger reconstituted his decimated regiment, displaying in the execution of this work all his wonted energy and activity. In a very short time he had inspired the recruits with as much enthusiasm and zeal as the old soldiers. His brilliant and patriotic conduct was, as it deserved to be, duly recognised, and he was made officer of the Legion of Honour.

On the 21st of December, his regiment left St. Maur and proceeded to Bourget, and from there to a point just beyond Bobigny, on the plain, where it remained on active duty until the 1st of January, 1871, without any tents or shelter of any kind, sleeping in the snow, wanting for everything, enduring, in fact, the bitterest privations. The cold was so intense during the night that the officers were obliged to make their men get up at frequent intervals to take running exercise. Had they not done this, the poor fellows would certainly have been frozen to death. Always in the midst of his soldiers, Boulanger constantly encouraged them by his personal example, his devotion to duty, and his untiring good humour, which never abandoned him, even under

the most unfavourable, disheartening circumstances. He always found a kind, encouraging word for everybody, and was particularly attentive to the sick and wounded.

He would frequently take a walk within fifty yards of the enemy, who often fired at him and the officers who accompanied him. When they did so, he would jump up on the earthworks, and on his companions remarking that it was a dangerous thing to do, and that the Prussians were very numerous, he would laugh and reply: "Bah! they are too awkward to do us any harm!" In this way he taught those under his orders that scorn of danger which is one of the soldier's first qualities. Besides this, he still continued his visits to the ambulances, and his presence, his affability, and his cheery manner served to mitigate, if only for a moment, the sufferings of the sick men.

He kept a watchful eye on everything connected with the regiment, and endeavoured, as far as possible, to provide creature comforts for his men, who had been sorely tried by the cruel winter of 1870. And, a fact worthy of remark, his regiment, which was partly composed of raw recruits, was still, during this last period of the war, a model of smartness and good conduct.

Without in any way relaxing the strict rules of discipline, he obtained without undue severity, simply by contriving to excite the *amour propre* of each one, really remarkable results. The 114th Regiment manœuvred, in December, 1870, before the enemy, just as if it had been on parade.

During this hard and terrible campaign, Boulanger again gave the clearest proofs of his ability as a soldier and a leader. When under fire, he gave, as all French officers did, the best examples of bravery, but of a cheerful, natural bravery, devoid of all affectation. On the field of battle he was just as good-tempered and cool as he was when in barracks. He had not only succeeded in obtaining the absolute confidence of his men, but, what is more

difficult still, that of his officers as well. This lieutenant-colonel of thirty-three had five captains under his orders who were already officers at the time of the Crimean War, but who nevertheless felt for him a devotion and a confidence equal to that felt by the common soldiers. In fact, he exercised over the whole regiment the same influence he had exercised over the cadets at St. Cyr, and by the same methods, by the same manner of conducting himself.

After the 1st of January, 1871, the regiment was placed in a somewhat more comfortable position: it only remained at Bobigny one day out of two, going to rest for twenty-four hours at Pantin. They continued in this way until the capitulation, when the regiment returned to Paris. It was then ordered to proceed to Bagnolet, and, later on, was selected to form part of the garrison of Paris, then composed of about twelve thousand men It was about this time—that is to say, on the 27th of January, 1871—that Boulanger was promoted to the rank of colonel. Duty in Paris was just then very fatiguing, as they had to patrol the city night and day. On the 15th of March, the date on which the Prussians made their memorable entry into the capital, the 114th Regiment was appointed to guard the line of march. This was, both for Boulanger and his regiment, a cruel and difficult duty. An incident in which he was directly concerned nearly led to a collision between the French and the Germans. The following is an account of the affair as it was related to me by one of the officers then serving under Boulanger:

"When Paris, overwhelmed by superior numbers, and, starved out, was forced to open its gates to the victorious Prussians, the latter's troops entered the capital to parade for a few hours within the limits of the Champs Elysées and the Tuileries. General, then Colonel, Boulanger, commanded the line troops, drawn up along the Rue St. Honoré, guarding the limits beyond which neither the

Prussians nor the Parisians were allowed to pass. It was about ten o'clock in the morning. At a corner of the street, not far from Baron Rothschild's house, there suddenly appeared a Prussian general, the Commander-in-chief of the victorious troops, followed by his brilliant staff, who were about to cross the line of demarcation, when Colonel Boulanger, spurring his horse, rode up and cried out,—

"'General, you cannot pass!'

"The latter, pretending not to understand what the Colonel said, appeared determined to pass, when Boulanger, purple with rage and hatred, spurred his horse forward, drew his sword, and cried out in a loud, commanding tone,—

"'You cannot pass, general, and if you advance another step——' Then, seeing that all the Prussians had pulled up, he added, laying great stress on his words, 'You must respect orders! You understand me!'

"The Prussian general then rode back, followed by his staff, and it may safely be said that, thanks to the energy displayed by Colonel Boulanger, a dangerous collision was avoided, for no man could foresee what would have happened had the Prussian general and his staff continued to push forward amidst a population excited to the highest degree by the sight of their insolent enemies. A little more and a perfect slaughter must have taken place, and Germany might have had to mourn the loss of some of her most valuable officers, for, fully sympathising with our brave colonel's firm attitude, our hands were already grasping our *chassepots*, the quality of the game was so tempting. Very few people are acquainted with this little incident, which might have had very serious results, but General Boulanger has not forgotten it."

On the 8th of March the regiment went to occupy the forts of Montrouge, Bicêtre, and Ivry. The colonel, who was quartered at the latter fort, kept the men hard at work, drilling them every

day, so as to have them well in hand. In the night of the 18th March, during the Commune, they left the forts and marched to Versailles, and, during the last few days of the struggle he received a fourth wound at the right elbow, and was again mentioned in the order of the day. As to the stories about his rancorous, vindictive conduct during the repression of the Commune, they are pure calumnies, which have been repeatedly disproved by facts, and have been put in circulation by his enemies for political purposes.

At the close of the campaign, Boulanger, faithful to his friendships, anxious to do due honour to those of his regiment who had fallen on the field of battle, first caused the dead officers to be decorated. Moreover, he took care to personally send the insignia to the families of those officers, together with a letter, which may be considered as a brevet of honour, and in which, after sincere and hearty expressions of condolence, he told with what bravery the departed officers had conducted themselves. In the same way, he never ceased to watch over the interests and welfare of his soldiers, doing ample justice to those who had given proofs of their ability or courage.

When the distribution of the military medals took place, it was always with the same imposing ceremonial—before the whole regiment under arms, and formed into a square. The colonel would take his place in the centre, surrounded by his officers, call the men forward, and tell their comrades by what act of courage they had distinguished themselves, what qualities had led to their being decorated. He thus imbued every man in the regiment with a sentiment of honour and *esprit de corps*, doubling the value of the recompense awarded.

His chiefs also had learned to appreciate him at his true worth, for shortly afterwards he was promoted to the rank of Commander of the Legion of Honour. Yet the reactionary commission for the revision of military grades, known since as "*La Commission*

des Marquis," on account of its exclusively aristocratic composition, relegated him to the rank of lieutenant-colonel again, first at St. Denis, and then on the 9th of December, 1871, to the 109th Regiment. This was a crying injustice, for never had the rank of colonel been so bravely conquered.

When Boulanger left the 114th Regiment, to which he was so strongly attached, all the officers came to his farewell reception, presented him with a magnificent album containing their photographs, and expressed their heartfelt regret at his departure. As we have already had occasion to say, he possessed the rare gift of making himself beloved as well as obeyed.

In 1872, Boulanger was again selected for promotion, and the Minister of War entrusted him with the reorganization of the 133rd Regiment of the line. He was, at that moment, just thirty-five years old.

Re-promoted to the rank of Colonel of the 70th Regiment, on the 15th of November, 1874, he returned, on the 26th of December of the same year, to the regiment he had re-formed, the 133rd, then quartered at Belley. During the five years and a half that he commanded this regiment he succeeded, as usual, in winning the affection of his officers and men, and even now he is constantly receiving proofs of the attachment they still feel for their old colonel, who is never happier than when he can in any way assist his old comrades, officers or men.

It was from Belley that Boulanger was supposed to have written that famous letter to the Duc d'Aumale; but to prove that he was not in the habit of intriguing even to obtain well-merited promotion, we may mention that he waited sixteen years for the grade of Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour, although he was made Commander of that Order just after the war.

This may, we think, be fairly considered as a striking example of long-suffering patience.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RISING OF BOULANGER'S STAR.

ON the 14th of May, 1880, Boulanger was promoted to the rank of brigadier-general. He was only forty-three years old, but he ought to, and would have, obtained this promotion much sooner had it not been for the arbitrary action of *La Commission des Marquis*, already referred to. There is no doubt Boulanger has got one of the most brilliant records of any general officer in the French army, notwithstanding his comparative youth. This is a fact that cannot be denied even by the most jealous of his military or political enemies. Fully aware of this, they have made a feeble and fruitless effort to cover his military career with ridicule by calling him "*Le Brav' Général.*"

As Boulanger was well acquainted with everything relating to the infantry, he determined to make himself equally familiar with the sister branch, the cavalry. He therefore applied for an appointment, and obtained, on the 21st of July, 1880, the command of the 14th Brigade of Cavalry at Valence, a post he retained until the 16th of April, 1882, and which he filled with the utmost distinction. This was the opinion of even those severe critics who had at first blamed the Minister of War for giving an important cavalry command to an officer who had spent his whole military career in the infantry. However, those who were with him at the manœuvres found him imbued with the most liberal, practical

ideas concerning a branch of the service with which he had not, up to that time, been practically acquainted.

When he arrived at Valence to take command of his brigade, he fully expected to find a certain amount of distrust as to his abilities as a cavalry man, and in order to prove that he was fully capable of holding his own, even with experienced men of that arm, he hit on the following expedient, which fortunately succeeded, for, as he admitted afterwards, he might have broken his neck.

Boulanger being present one day when one of the regiments was being reviewed, he asked the colonel whether they did much jumping.

"Certainly," replied the colonel; "our ground is laid out specially for jumping exercises."

"Very good," said the General; "we will go over it together."

Naturally the officers thought, seeing him mounted on a splendid horse, that he had chosen it specially, and that he would not dare to run the risk of taking one of the regimental horses. But they were wrong in their surmise, for suddenly Boulanger called an adjutant, asked him to lend him his horse, not a very brilliant mount, and immediately took his place at the head of his officers. This was a perfectly fair trial: all the obstacles, and there were some very difficult ones, were cleared without the slightest *contretemps*. They thus saw that the infantry man could ride as well as any trooper in the regiment. From that day forth they had no further misgivings on that special point, any more than on any other relating to the service.

The fact is, this was no new thing to Boulanger, for whilst he was in command of the 133rd Regiment he never failed to invite all fresh arrivals in the regiment to take a ride with him in the environs of the town. These promenades were soon transformed into break-neck gallops, and the colonel was thus able to judge of

the equestrian capabilities of the new-comers. As he always set a good example of activity and pluck, no one protested, and they could not help admiring the handsome colonel on his dashing black charger.

During Boulanger's stay at Valence, the Americans were preparing to celebrate the centenary of Yorktown, and, mindful of the generous part played by Lafayette and other Frenchmen in their memorable struggle for independence, they sent a cordial invitation to the French Government to send over a delegation to represent that country. This invitation was accepted in the same hearty spirit in which it had been given, and the Government decided to send a military man to America to represent the French nation. This officer would not only be required to talk English like a native, but would be called upon to represent the French Republic and army with tact and *éclat*. This was naturally a rather difficult task, the disastrous campaign of 1870 having somewhat dimmed France's reputation as a military nation.

After having consulted the available list of general officers, and well weighed their qualities and fitness for the work, the Government fixed their choice on General Boulanger, and he was accordingly appointed to this post of honour on the 13th of August, 1881.

As soon as this selection was made, the Foreign Minister asked Boulanger to go and talk over the matter with him.

"You must be careful," said the Minister, in the course of conversation, "not to shock the Americans' quiet tastes by wearing very gaudy uniforms. In fact, I think you better appear in a frock coat, as their Ministers do in Europe."

Boulanger, who knew the Yankees' decided taste for showy uniforms, high sounding titles, and a profuse display of gold lace, could not help smiling to himself; but he, of course, agreed with the Minister, and left him under the impression that the French Mission would all appear in a sort of funeral suit.

"But," said he, in relating the story, "I went home, packed my trunks with the most brilliant and showy uniforms, and told my staff to do the same. Why, had we gone in the dress prescribed by the Foreign Minister, the Americans would have taken us for a deputation of mutes come over to lament the departed glories of the French nation. As it was, our Mission was one of the most popular features of the centenary, and we were overwhelmed with attentions from all classes of the community."

The Marquis of Rochambeau wrote an account of these Republican manifestations in America, which greatly tended to strengthen the ties already existing between the United States and France. In his narrative the marquis states "that the General represented France and the French army in the happiest manner. The men admired the acumen and smartness of his remarks on everything he saw ; the women his elegant, martial appearance and graceful manners. France could not have sent a better man to represent her across the Atlantic."

The *Canada*, which took over the military mission of which Boulanger was the chief, arrived in sight of New York on the 5th of October of the same year, and the French delegates, the descendants of Lafayette, and the representatives of the French Republic, were received with an enthusiasm impossible to describe. The members of the Mission were obliged to admit that even their National *Fête* on the 14th of July, when all Paris is illuminated, and the Champs Elysées, the Place de la Concorde, and the Trocadéro present a fairy-like scene, could not equal the reception the Americans gave their French guests. The former, far more grateful than the modern Italians, remembered that France had shown wonderful sympathy towards them in their struggle for independence. There was only one exception to this general enthusiasm, and that was not the fault of the American people. When the day for the Yorktown Centenary arrived, the German

party, very strong in America, almost spoilt the glorious celebration by anti-French manifestations, which were condemned by all right-thinking people as being in the worst possible taste. The French Mission shared a steamer, the *Magicienne*, with several German officers, an American admiral, and other officials. After they had started, General Boulanger observed with surprise that the American men-of-war, and even their own steamer, were flying a voluminous German flag above the French flag.

Orders were given to stop, and the *fête* was brought to a stand-still, the General and his friends refusing to disembark until this insult had been fully repaired. President Arthur and his ministers interfered, but in vain ; there was a man on board who was inflexible on this point of national honour, and that man was Boulanger. When evening came on, the flags disappeared, and the French officers then consented to disembark. There is not the slightest doubt that the German commander telegraphed a full account of the affair to Bismarck, who thus found that he had to reckon with General Boulanger. He received a further proof of this in the Schnæbelé affair, in which Boulanger, by his firm attitude, obtained full satisfaction for his country. He has always been of opinion that it is not by humilating one's self that provocations can be stopped, but by adopting a firm, dignified attitude, which leads the aggressive party to reflect before going too far. Did he need to borrow a motto, he could very well adopt the famous "*Peace with Honour*" of Beaconsfield, for it fully expresses his convictions.

But the French visitors were fully avenged for the ridiculous insult the Germans had tried to put upon them. Throughout the States they were received with the utmost cordiality, and excited great enthusiasm amongst the free and independent citizens of the sister Republic. The General, whose name had become popular in a few days, was frequently carried off in triumph by the crowd,

electrified by his quiet energy and his patriotic, stirring speeches. America may boast of having "invented" the young and brilliant General, even before his own countrymen; in fact, in France, the authorities were rather anxious to stifle the news of the stir Boulanger was making in America, lest it should give offence across the frontier.

During his stay in Philadelphia, the General met with an amusing adventure, which is well worth relating, if only to show that he possesses that "two-o'clock-in-the-morning" courage on which Napoleon so prided himself, and with which, as a matter of fact, very few people are endowed.

One evening a reception was given to the delegates, at which General Boulanger wore several jewelled orders. On retiring that night, he left them, with his watch, on the dressing-table. All at once he was awakened by the fall of his watch on the marble slab, and saw a burly man standing in the middle of the room. The General, who is not a big man, jumped out of bed and made one leap at the thief, and so fierce was the assault that he jammed the rogue closely into a corner, and wrested his pistol from his hand. Seizing the sword which he had worn the night before, he pointed it at the fellow's throat, and held him there until Count Lichtenstein, who was aroused by the noise of the struggle, arrived, with a special police officer belonging to the hotel. This official, however, wore no uniform. "*Non! non! Un gendarme!*" cried the General, who had no faith in civilians. "*I zall hold him here; ven he zall advance, I zall pin him to the vall. Un gendarme!*" The thief, who could almost feel the sword at his neck, took great care not to "advance." A policeman in proper uniform was found, and the fiery General at last delivered up his prisoner. The man, recognised as a professional thief, was brought before the grand jury before noon, tried, convicted, and sentenced that very day to three years' imprisonment. Boulanger professed himself an

admirer of many American institutions, but of none more than their "speedy, inexorable justice."

We have often heard him relate this story of the midnight combat with as much zest and eagerness as if it had been some famous exploit on a field of battle.

When the centenary *fêtes* were over, Boulanger, who had learned to like the country, and wished to see more of it, applied for leave of absence for the purpose of making a tour through those parts of the States he had not already visited. On leaving America, he went to Canada, where he found a large French population, and where most educated people speak both French and English. Here again he had a most sympathetic reception, so that he sailed away from the new world delighted with his visit and all he had seen.

On his return to France, he immediately resumed command of his cavalry brigade at Valence, where he remained until the 16th of April, 1882, on which date he was appointed by General Billot, then Minister of War, to the important post of Director of Infantry. The entire army fully approved this happy choice: officers and men had the greatest confidence in this General, whose military career had been so distinguished.

They knew his intelligence, his practical temperament, his zeal in the cause of reform. His stay at the War Office was marked by a long series of reforms and improvements: each day saw some useful work accomplished, some cumbersome red-tape system abolished. The "ten-to-four-and-two-hours-for-lunch" gentlemen in the War Office stood aghast at the amount of work this terrible General got through every day, and, above all, at the amount of work he made them do. They had never had such a chief before, but it was not long before he inspired them with the same feverish ardour, so that at last they actually got to enjoy doing a good day's work. He had his eye everywhere, and on everything, and

it would be impossible to give a detailed account of all the useful reforms he effected during his term of office.

He reorganized the School of Saint Maixent, a training establishment for aspiring non-commissioned officers, who, after a period of twelve months' hard work, pass out of the school with a sub-lieutenant's commission in their pockets, and thus find the whole military career open to them, as freely as if they had qualified at the more aristocratic school of Saint Cyr.

He also organized the school for regimental children, increased the staff of the Military Prytaneum, completed the code of instructions for soldiers, simplified and improved the organization of the Reserve and Territorial troops, caused a new style of havresac to be adopted, fixed on a new uniform for the officers, arranged a code of rules for rifle practice, etc.

Such are a few of the reforms introduced by the new Director; we could enumerate many others, but this suffices to give an idea of his activity and capacity.

General Boulanger, an indefatigable worker, wanting but little sleep, and possessing, besides, a rare power of assimilation, had thrown himself heart and soul into his work. By doing this, he obtained such results that even his daily increasing enemies were obliged to do justice to his merits and to his remarkable qualities as an administrator and an organizer. It was at this time that his great popularity in the Army commenced, they having learned to look upon him as being the only man capable of effecting many much-needed reforms.

Always working with the same zeal, he only left his office to go and represent the Minister of War at various military solemnities, and to communicate to all around him that spark of sacred fire which works wonders on all those who are subjected to its influence.

His burning words always excite wonderful enthusiasm in the

breasts of all soldiers, and in none more than the non-commissioned officers at Saint Maixent, for whom he has done so much, and who regard him as their favourite hero.

He was equally popular amongst the common soldiers, and had even at that time done a great deal to improve their position, as regards rations, lodgings, leave of absence, etc. The fact is, he is really fond of the humbler sort of people—of those who have nothing for themselves but their misfortunes and the justice of their cause. It would almost seem as if he thought that the rich can take care of themselves, and that it was almost his duty to look after and help those who cannot always help themselves. The masses admire him because, a child of the people himself, he has always remained a friend of the people; so different to many professional politicians, who have used the poor electors as simple stepping-stones to fortune, honours, and all the pleasures and profit that a Ministerial position enables these unblushing "patriots" to procure for themselves.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PACIFICATION OF TUNIS.

AS most people are probably aware, the Tunisian campaign is popularly supposed to have been undertaken by the French Ministry of the period in order to satisfy a group of financial men anxious to obtain possession of what they took to be a rich and fertile country. Monsieur Jules Ferry, responsible for the disastrous Tonkin expedition, was also responsible, in a measure, for the Tunis affair. His only excuse is, that he believed, and, in fact, still believes, that France is not only bound to found a flourishing colonial empire, but that she is quite capable of doing so. Unfortunately for him, the majority of his countrymen are far from agreeing with him on this point; it would, indeed, appear that the only gentleman who approves of his views, and supports them to the utmost of his power, is Prince Bismarck. But approval and support from this quarter are not very palatable or reassuring to the average French citizen and patriot, who is suspicious enough to believe that the astute Chancellor may have private reasons for this course of action, which have nothing whatever to do with the real interests of France herself.

Boulanger, who took no part in the first expedition, had the more gratifying honour of pacifying this country, which had, up to that time, enjoyed the reputation of being quite ungovernable. During

a campaign which, unfortunately, the limits of this work will not allow us to describe in detail, he contrived, by a rare display of firmness, tact, and that *bonhomie* which is one of his secrets, to restore order in Tunis without firing a single shot.

Appointed General of Division on the 18th of February, 1884, Boulanger was at once entrusted with the difficult task of taking the supreme command of the Tunisian Army of occupation. Any other young and ambitious general would have burned to distinguish himself, and to acquire a cheap sort of fame by declaring a war of extermination against the insurgents. But Boulanger, being a patriotic, humane man, took a different view of the situation, and did nothing of the sort. He went through the country, quieting the natives by kindly words, and exposing no one to danger except himself. When he was appointed to this responsible post, he at once understood the important fact that his mission was a peaceful one, and, though these peaceful ideas and plans were difficult of execution in a country like Tunis, he clung to them with all the tenacity of an Anglo-Breton. His aim was to restore perfect order amongst the insurgent tribes, to lead the conquered race to understand the reasons for French intervention, and to cause the tricoloured flag to be loved and respected by those who had but lately been fighting against it. Such was the task the General set himself on arriving at Tunis, and he had the satisfaction of knowing, on quitting the country, that he had fully accomplished it.

He commenced operations by ordering all French troops to be withdrawn from the frontier of Tripoli. The French columns therefore returned, and the Tunisians themselves were called upon to restore and maintain order in the districts where the insurrection was not entirely crushed out. This politic measure enabled the General to abolish all the military posts which the French soldiers had occupied up to that time, and thus distribute the liberated

troops in such a way as to strengthen the principal posts which still had to be maintained.

Having done this and elaborated a general plan of operations, Boulanger determined, a few months after his arrival, to make a tour of inspection through the country. He wanted to see for himself the real state of the Regency in every part, to visit the troops and the native tribes, in order to find out the wants of the former and the claims of the latter; he wished, above all, to show the excited natives, whom a fanatical religion had transformed into veritable assassins, that France was resolved not to touch their property, and equally determined to respect their religious belief. It was highly important to inspire them with perfect confidence, and to prevail upon them to overcome the hostility of their friends who had taken refuge in Tripoli. Two years of constant effort were required to bring about this result, and to gain the friendship of the last of the insurgents, but only a man possessing the iron constitution the General is endowed with could have brought such an enterprise to a successful issue, or undertaken such journeys as he performed across the burning desert, at the height of an African summer.

Every morning, at daybreak, he quitted the camp, the oasis where they had halted for the night, and, accompanied by two orderly officers, would ride on an average sixty miles a day, and that with the temperature at several degrees above fever heat. On certain occasions he was escorted by a detachment of the famous *Chasseurs d'Afrique* or the Tunisian *Spahis*, whilst sometimes the natives themselves would come across the desert to meet him and escort him to the next halting-place.

On these occasions, the Sheiks made a point of donning their most brilliant costumes, and of mounting their fleetest horses, which they covered with silver trappings, and bright-coloured silk hangings. These splendid horsemen, full of pluck and dash,

enlivened the journey by their mad coursing through the brush-wood and across the sandy desert, whilst at the halting-places they frequently organized one of those original *fantasias*, which somewhat resemble the military tournaments of mediæval times.

This hardy troop of horsemen, chiefly composed of Sheiks and Caids, would gallop off on their beautiful Arab chargers, fleet as the wind. After having fired two shots in the air from their *moukalas*, the cavaliers would throw the arm over their shoulders, and, urging forth their beautiful steeds, brandish their long yatagans and then place them between their teeth in order to reload their guns, inlaid with mother-of-pearl and silver.

These *fantasias* were the only diversions that helped to enliven the interminable route across the desert, their dreary rides across the immense, barren solitudes which separate one oasis from another. They occasionally saw a few tumular stones, the remains of ancient monuments still existing, and furnishing a fine illustration of the civilizing power of the Romans, who had made this province of Africa the granary of Italy.

The General always encouraged his officers to visit these ruins and to copy and translate the inscriptions; an attractive study, which proved to be as useful as it was interesting; the researches thus made and the documents collected by these young officers being sent by him to Paris, where they were of real service to the archæologists.

However, they did not, as a rule, remain long in the same place. The General, on arriving at the post he wished to visit, immediately received the native chiefs who came to assure him of their fidelity. He would then speak to them about France, her grandeur, and her civilizing power, assuring them that in exchange for their submission they would obtain under French protection liberty, tranquillity, and justice, and that prosperity, the daughter of peace, would soon follow. He would then listen to their complaints,

their claims, do them justice immediately when such a thing was possible, and if not, promised—and he never failed to keep his word—to give the matter his best attention on his return to Tunis. His speech was so open, so convincing, that these native chiefs, who had so long been the victims of extortion, dishonest dealing, and knavery, put the utmost faith in him, and went away to carry offers of peace into the neighbouring villages, throughout the territory occupied by the hostile tribes. Then the General visited the huts, the hospitals, and the ambulances, and immediately ordered any improvements he thought might be necessary. He has always been a man of wonderful decision of character, quick in coming to a decision, equally quick in putting it into execution. When once he has made up his mind that a thing ought to be done, he pushes it forward without allowing himself to be stopped by anything. In fact, he has always made a point of putting into practice the good, old-fashioned adage, "Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day." This may certainly be considered one of the most valuable traits in Boulanger's character, and one which has powerfully contributed to his success throughout his career.

In order to get a perfectly clear idea of the general situation of the troops, he made it a rule to invite to dinner all the officers of the post where he happened to be spending the night, and, what is thoroughly characteristic of the man, he would also invite two or three non-commissioned officers, chosen from amongst the best and oldest in the regiment. He would talk with them in the most affable, friendly way, question them in a sympathetic manner, interest himself in their hopes and ambitions, and promise to help them should it ever be in his power to do so.

Though they generally remained talking until late at night, they were always in the saddle at a very early hour in the morning, and

the Arabs, who are also very early risers as a rule, were generally up to cheer the French detachment as it rode away *en route* for the next post.

Two years in succession General Boulanger undertook the same tour of inspection, travelling over nearly the same ground. These journeys, although they were sometimes very wearisome, have left him some of the pleasantest memories of his military career.

The marches were very fatiguing, and the French officers who were with him have not forgotten certain feats of endurance or rather *tours de force* they were obliged to accomplish, because they knew very well that such exploits impressed the Arabs more than the finest speeches in the world could have done. Thus, one fine afternoon, when the glass was about a hundred degrees in the shade, they rode ten miles at full gallop across the desert from Hel-Amma to Tiozeur. A short time after this, General Boulanger performed a similar gallop across the burning plains of Kairouan ; all the officers of his staff naturally made a point of honour of following him, but several were obliged to take to their beds as soon as the journey was over, the pace and the heat having been rather too much for them.

These violent equestrian exercises were not undertaken for the purpose of making a vain show of their skill and powers of endurance, their utility was incontestable, as has already been shown, by the effect such feats produced on the natives. The Arabs who witnessed these exercises, being hardy and daring horsemen themselves, ever ready to admire brilliant horsemanship, naturally felt increased respect for the French as a military nation.

The rare gunshots that were fired in the Regency during the two years that Boulanger commanded the army of occupation were only heard on the borders of Tripoli. In this region, where the frontiers were rather badly defined, the predatory incursions and the highway robberies had never been thoroughly suppressed.

But Boulanger, assisted by General De la Roque, who was thoroughly acquainted with the language and customs of the natives, soon transformed this permanent hostility into a genuine friendship; for they succeeded in persuading more than 120,000 Tunisians, who had revolted on the arrival of the French columns, and had been up in arms ever since, to return quietly to their homes. Thanks to these indulgent and prudent measures they thus eradicated a source of permanent danger, so that Boulanger, on his departure from Tunis, left the country entirely pacified; so effectually, indeed, that the authorities were able to reduce the number of French soldiers then in the country as an army of occupation.

At Tunis, General Boulanger occupied in the Government the position of Minister of War. He had not been long in office before he suppressed an interminable number of generals, colonels, and other native officers, who were not the slightest use, and frequently had not a single soldier under their command.

He gave the Bey a guard of honour which his Highness called his army. This "army" was composed of one battalion of infantry, one squadron of cavalry, and a battery of artillery. Though not very formidable, it was, nevertheless, composed of real soldiers, well officered, drilled in the modern style, according to the French army regulations, simplified and translated into Arabic. There was a certain progress, as one simple fact will prove.

General Campenon, a former Minister of War, had, when he was captain, spent several years in Tunis. In his capacity as Chief of a Mission charged with the reorganization of the Bey's army, he had contrived to constitute a really effective army, which, after he left, gradually fell into the old grooves again, but the remains of which were still extant when events brought the French back to Tunis again. Naturally, the traditions had become somewhat old-fashioned. The French had introduced their system of military

conscription into the country, but in course of time their teaching was interpreted in a very curious manner.

Thus, when General Boulanger went to visit Bizerte, he found a number of white-haired artillerymen, most of them too old for effective military duty, but who were yet sufficiently active for the service of their pieces, enormous cannon which had become quite inoffensive, but which still made a pretence of defending the port. These decrepid veterans had been in the army for more than thirty years, but yet still belonged to the class of young soldiers formed in the country by Captain Campenon. After the departure of this officer, the Tunisian military authorities had not understood that this contingent of young artillerymen ought to have been replaced year by year by another class, freshly recruited. Owing to this original method of interpreting French military regulations, the grey-bearded, tottering veterans, never thinking of deserting or making the slightest complaint, had continued for thirty years to perform a duty which was only intended to last twelve months. Not in France or England would the authorities find such a shining example of blind submission to the recruiting law. One must be an Arab and a fatalist to accept such a position in such a passive way. These superannuated artillerymen came and claimed their arrears of pay, which had been treated by the Tunisian authorities as Monsieur Jules Ferry treated China, as "*une quantité négligeable.*" General Boulanger ordered them to be paid, and although pitying them very much, was cruel enough to disband them; but notwithstanding this it is probable that, from sheer force of habit, they or their ghosts still mount a phantom guard on the ramparts of the Casbah, at Bizerte, over their worm-eaten gun-carriages and their antiquated apologies for guns.

During these various journeys the General brought the officers and the non-commissioned officers of the most distant stations the crosses of honour and medals they had gained by their bravery or

good conduct. As is well known, when Minister of War he fixed in a precise manner the mode and ceremonial to be observed for the distribution of military decorations. In doing this he was only applying to the whole army the rules he had laid down for his regiment, when colonel, and for his division, when general.

On such occasions all the troops in the garrison were placed under arms, and Boulanger never failed to recall, before attaching the cross on an officer's breast, by how many years' service, the number of campaigns, and the gravity of the wounds this recompense had been merited.

At Tunis these ceremonies took place in the Avenue de la Marine, and formed a really striking, imposing sight. The foreigners, Italians, Greeks, Maltese, etc., as well as the Arabs, came in crowds to witness these brilliant military parades, by which they were greatly interested, and not a little impressed.

The General never lost an opportunity of showing the French troops to the natives in their most brilliant, attractive aspect; for he was really proud of his little army, into which he had succeeded in infusing his own enthusiasm and martial spirit; and the reviews he held two years in succession, on the 14th of July, the French National *Fête* day, were acknowledged by the Tunisians to be the most brilliant military pageants they had ever had the privilege of witnessing.

In a political sense, matters did not go on so well, and difficulties were frequently springing up between the General and Monsieur Cambon, the Civil Resident appointed by the French Republic. The Resident, as a functionary, thought the restoration of the Bey's power, under French—*i.e.* the Resident's—control, was the best means of assuring the prosperity of the country. The Bey thus became, to all outward appearances at least, a much more powerful sovereign than he had been before the arrival of the French. He had an effective, fixed budget, and civil Controllers

were appointed to superintend the collection of the taxes in his name. This system was, no doubt, excellent from a Tunisian standpoint, because it established and maintained an equal balance between all the foreigners resident in the Regency. But the General could not see, taking into consideration the results it was likely to produce, what advantage they—the French—were to obtain from such an equal arrangement. He could not help asking himself very seriously whether France had sacrificed so many men and so many millions of francs in order, after all, to occupy no more prominent position in the Regency than the Government of any other country.

The question became more complicated every day, owing to the fact that the Tunisian Government treated the French with but scant courtesy, as may be gathered from the following characteristic incident. A few days before the celebration of the National *Fête* a box of flags arrived at the Custom House at Tunis, sent by a firm of Marseilles contractors to the Engineers, for the decoration of the public monuments and military buildings of the city. The Tunisian authorities wanted to collect on this box the duty of eight per cent. which they then levied on everything coming into the Regency. General Boulanger, not at all satisfied at having had to pay such a duty on the food and clothing sent into the country from France for his soldiers, positively refused to pay for this box, saying that the French flags had been admitted into Tunis four years previous without paying any duty, and that he would not pay anything now. In fact, he even threatened to send a company of soldiers to the custom house to fetch the box away. His energetic protest was, however, of no avail: the French flags were considered as so much "cloth stuffs," and the Tunisian Treasury, intent, like Shylock, on having its pound of flesh, collected its eight per cent. on the flags.

This affair, and several others about which the general public

knew nothing, had caused the relations between the patriotic, public-spirited General and the somewhat timid Civil Resident to become more strained than ever, when a fresh incident occurred which tended still further to complicate the situation.

One evening, at the Italian theatre, at Tunis, a French military officer threw a bouquet to an Italian singer; this lady disdainfully kicked aside the bouquet offered as a graceful tribute to her talent, and with shocking bad taste at once picked up and placed in her dress a flower which had been thrown to her at the same time by a young Italian.

Indignant at this ridiculous, gratuitous insult, the military officers present, supported by the naval officers belonging to the squadron then lying in the harbour, protested so vigorously and so noisily that the manager was obliged to have the curtain lowered. The entire audience then rose amidst a terrible tumult, and the public being a mixed one, composed of spectators of various nationalities, very high words were exchanged. As the crowd was filing out of the theatre, an Italian, hiding behind a door, rushed on to a French military officer, and, before the latter could see what he was going to do, struck him full in the face with his clenched fist. The officer would certainly have killed him had not a company of Zouaves come up and arrested the cowardly Italian.

The next day, the French Tribunal, which then had the right of judging all foreigners, condemned the offender to the ridiculous punishment of a week's imprisonment.

In presence of such a serious affront, avenged in such an insufficient way, the entire army protested; not only did each individual officer and soldier personally feel the insult, but it was certain that after this punishment, which was equivalent to an acquittal, they were sure to see a repetition of those insults which had been showered on the French from their first arrival in Tunis.

General Boulanger, clearly foreseeing this result, sharing the just discontent of his officers and men, and desiring both to protect their honour and assure their security, published an order of the day to the effect that should the French officers and soldiers be violently attacked or provoked, their duty would be to use their arms in legitimate defence. This order of the day, which no energetic commander would have hesitated to publish under similar circumstances, gave rise to the most impassioned and malignant comments.

Though, on the one hand, the officers were pleased to find themselves frankly supported by their General, and though the French colony, sharing their views, fully approved the General's action, the diplomates, who are always somewhat timid, displayed great anxiety. The Civil Resident remarked in his report to the Government that this incident might be differently construed by Italy, and that the discontent of this nation could not fail to create unpleasant complications. Whether Monsieur Cambon privately added that it might be advisable to find an outlet for General Boulanger's energies in France, we cannot say; at any rate, the expression of these fears resulted in a presidential decree, signed by Monsieur Jules Grevy, and countersigned by Monsieur de Freycinet, appointing Monsieur Cambon Resident-General and Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Occupation.

As soon as he was informed of this decision, General Boulanger wrote to General Campenon, then Minister of War, requesting to be placed on the reserve list, and that the motives of this retirement might be clearly stated in the decree. This susceptibility was considered by every one to be quite legitimate, and a part of the French press expressed their full approval of Boulanger's firm and dignified attitude.

We do not suppose for one moment that the French writers, on taking up this simple question of military mismanagement and

injustice, realized the fact that they were launching into publicity a man destined to engross universal attention for years, create a new and powerful political party, and, in all probability, introduce a new and improved system, if not a new form of government, into the country.

Be that as it may, Boulanger from that time forth assumed the proportions of a public character, he was "in the movement," as they say, his slightest acts were chronicled, criticised, or condemned, according to the "colour" of the organ, and the newspapers had struck a mine of information and subject matter almost equal in value to that famous Californian mine discovered by the Bonanza king.

These events took place in the early part of the month of July, 1885, and, if we may believe the documents then published by several newspapers of the period, the Minister of War replied to General Boulanger that owing to the presence of so many foreigners in Tunis it was not advisable to make known the existence of any grave differences between the French military and civil authorities, and that too on the eve of the celebration of the National *Fête*.

This famous decree, by which a civilian was appointed to the chief command of an army operating in a strange country, had, it would appear, been obtained by a surprise, to which, perhaps Monsieur Daniel Wilson was not altogether a stranger. In any case, it was fully worthy of such an origin, and was not, fortunately, destined to remain in force long.

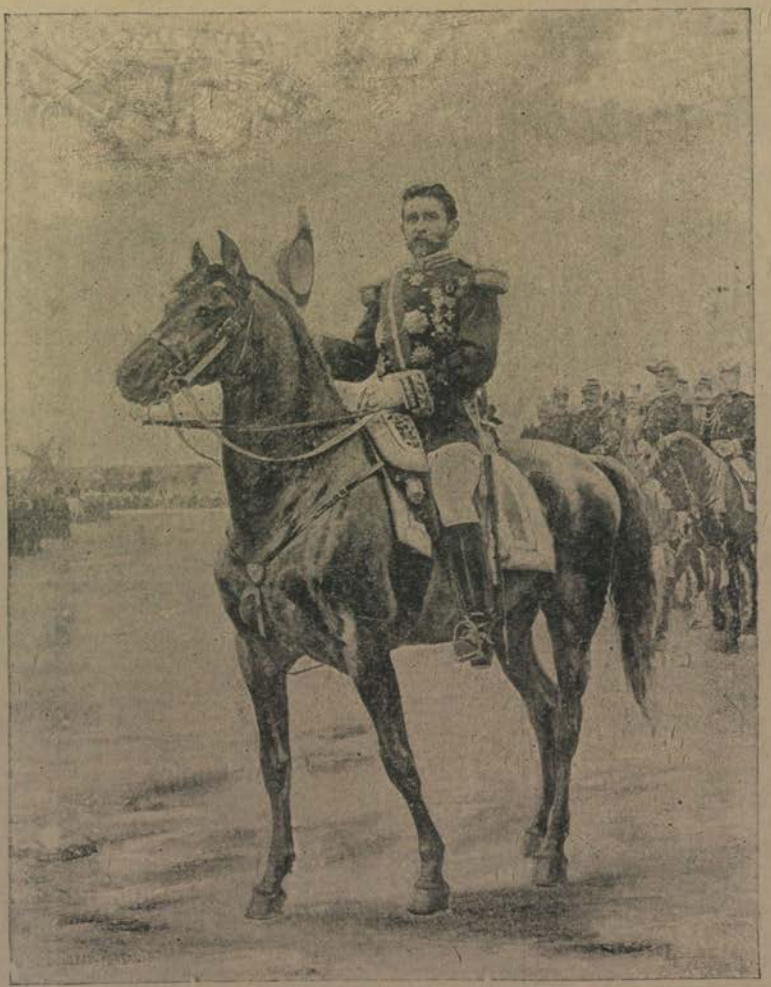
Yielding to the justice of his superior's patriotic remonstrances, General Boulanger consented to remain at his post. However, as at the end of the month of July, the situation was still unchanged, the General, having finished his tour of inspection, decided to return to France.

His departure from Tunis was made the occasion for a grand

ovation. The officers of the Tunis and other garrisons, a large crowd of Frenchmen and natives, Arab chiefs, great dignitaries from the Bey's palace, accompanied him to the station, and, in sympathetic terms, assured him that he was carrying away every one's confidence. Three days later he arrived in Paris, and took up his quarters, with his wife and two daughters, at the Hôtel du Louvre, which he was destined to make historical.

He retained his post as Commander-in-chief of the Tunisian Army of occupation for another six months, and exercised this command from Paris as efficaciously as he could have done at Tunis in his palace of Dar-Hassein. He continued at the same time to take part in the labours of certain Commissions sitting for the elucidation of various military subjects.

Having been Director of Infantry under three different Ministers of War, and being known alike for his ardent patriotism and his sincerely Republican principles, he was naturally destined to become, sooner or later, the supreme chief of the French Army, and thus more than realize his youthful dream—"the Cross of Honour and Marshal of France!"



GENERAL BOULANGER ON HIS BLACK HORSE.

CHAPTER VIII.

BOULANGER MINISTER OF WAR.

BUT Boulanger was not the sort of man to be allowed to remain idle long; for on the 8th of January, 1886, M. de Freycinet, who was then forming a Cabinet, appointed him to the post of Minister of War. This was, after all, only a proper recognition of his services in Tunis, and it was all the more flattering from the fact that the very man who had signed the decree in the Tunis affair was the one to operate this act of reparation in France.

The entire French press expressed approval of this appointment; M. Clémenceau and the majority of the Radical deputies exulted at the thought that they had at last got a Minister of War after their own hearts, and flattering articles were published in all their newspapers, congratulating the Government on this felicitous choice. Boulanger's first step was to surround himself with a staff absolutely devoted to Republican institutions, and at the same time fully competent in their several branches. He had, of course, to encounter the resistance of many bureaucrats, who had been at the War Office for a number of years, and were naturally opposed to all reforms which might disturb them in their snug quarters or give them extra work or trouble. But this did not prevent him pursuing the plan of reorganization which he had conceived and intended to put into execution.

Having appointed the best and most capable men to the

principal and most important posts at the War Office, the Chief of the Staff, the Directors of Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery, Engineers, and the Commissariat department, he determined to justify the terms of the General Order he had issued to the army the day of his appointment by commencing his work of transformation; not a brutal, radical, and hasty change, but a progressive reform, doing something every day, never going so fast as to be obliged to go over the same ground again.

One of his first tasks was to get up in the Chamber and explain his reasons for changing the garrisons of certain regiments. Several officers of the two cavalry regiments stationed at Tours having thought it good form to rail against the Republic during their visits to the country houses of the district, the Minister considered it his duty to send these two regiments to Nantes and Pontivy, far from the aristocratic influences which had led these officers to forget the respect due to the legally established government of the country. A Conservative deputy having complained of this proceeding in the Chamber, Boulanger replied in clear, energetic tones, explained why he had made this change, and concluded his short speech by asking,—

"Are we, or are we not, living under a Republic? One would never think so, judging by this attack made on a Minister because he had taken a step intended to ensure the Republic being treated with due respect. As for me, I will always prevent, as far as it lies in my power, the formation of exclusive coteries in the army, in which certain officers make a parade of their opposition to Republican institutions, as if it were a a mark of distinction, the necessary complement to their aristocratic birth."

This energetic declaration naturally produced an outburst of enthusiasm from the majority of the deputies, and, amidst general applause, a vote of confidence was accorded him by a majority of 375 against 174.

The General was of opinion that politics had no place in the Army, that the officers had no right to interfere in such matters; and that all they had to do was to obey the law, and carry out the instructions given them by the Minister of War, their natural and legal chief.

It would be almost impossible and, in any case, very fastidious to describe in detail all the reforms effected by Boulanger, the efforts he made to inspire the entire army with a proper military, patriotic spirit, and to improve the material welfare and comfort of the soldiers. We will therefore content ourselves with enumerating the principal reforms effected, those which attracted the greatest amount of public attention at the time.

One of his first measures was respecting the wearing of the beard. When the decree on this question appeared in the *Journal Officiel*, a hue and cry was raised in the press throughout the country, such as a more important measure would not have excited. Naturally the comic journals made great capital out of the affair, and sufficient jokes were made over it to stock all the papers in Europe. Some clever people averred that Boulanger instituted this decree about the beard for the same reason that Alcibiades cut his dog's tail off, *i.e.* for the purpose of directing public attention to himself. It would be idle to quote any of the jokes made on this occasion; our readers will readily think of a score or more which would admirably suit such a subject.

If we may believe the journalistic wits, this order filled the entire army with a sort of comic consternation. The barbers were in despair on being doomed to forced idleness, those whose beards would not grow at any price saw themselves sentenced to perpetual imprisonment, and the nursemaids, who shared the Duchess of Gerolstein's fondness for the military, could no longer recognise their admirers, who had suddenly grown immense beards. As to the *cantinières*, they were in an agony of doubt as to whether they

were required to wear a beard, like their comrades. Whenever the General went into the provinces, the authorities, instead of selecting the prettiest girl to present him with a bouquet, according to the usual custom, made a point of choosing the lady with the most respectable beard, hoping that this delicate attention might please and flatter the young Minister, who appeared to have such a strong prejudice against the knights of the razor. However, notwithstanding the serious attacks, the jokes, and the complaints of those who could not get their beards to grow, the army ultimately recognised the practical side of this measure, and found that the General was, after all, quite right.

His next work was to prescribe a certain system for changing regiments from one garrison to another. He was aware that the officers who stopped too long in one town frequently got into debt, and contracted *liaisons* which ruined their future military career. This, like all other reforms, met with a certain amount of opposition from men who had got into comfortable quarters and did not want to change them; but the measure was approved by the majority of military men, and enabled those who had been in dull towns to get their share of gaiety and life.

General Boulanger had his eye on everything, and was popularly supposed never to sleep, so active was he in finding out abuses and providing a remedy for them. One day he arranged for the painting of all military sentry boxes with the national colours, in order that they might easily be distinguished from other sentry boxes. Next he had his "eagle eye" on the names of the barracks, and ordered them to be called after some local or national military hero. He was always on the move, and contrived to find time to visit the great military schools, inspect the cadets, make them a stirring speech, distribute decorations, and even to visit hospitals, shooting-grounds, riding-schools, etc. Wherever there was a good work to encourage, or a good example to be set, the indefatigable

Minister was always there, coming back at night only to plunge into work, preparing for the next day.

This ubiquitous man, whose sharp eyes were everywhere, proved about this time that his ears were open as well. Having remarked that each military band played the *Marseillaise* in a different way, he ordered a Commission of composers to prepare an official, uniform score. Naturally, the comic papers did not allow this opportunity to escape. One represented Boulanger as a band-master conducting a regimental band. Another said:

"Our General has remarked that all bands do not play the *Marseillaise* in the same way. Some play '*Amour sacré de la Patrie*' in C sharp, whilst others murder it in B flat. Little flutes, —oh! those little flutes!—squeak when they come to '*Liberté chérie.*' Certain drums, indolent or seditious, fail to give sufficient emphasis to those phrases in which it is said 'that the sanguinary standard is raised,' and 'that they are about to slaughter our wives.' There are some strange plots being hatched inside some of the trombones, and certain clarionets appear to be positively grinning at the glorious Republic.

"This sort of thing cannot go on; our Minister of War, who has regulated the cut of the soldiers' beards, the painting of the sentry-boxes, and the consumption of codfish, has turned his attention to our national music, for the purpose of reforming that too. What a genius!" etc., etc.

The War Office people had had a taste of his quality whilst he was Director of Infantry, but they found that he had then been a comparatively sleepy bureaucrat to what he was as Minister of War. From the moment of his appointment he kept hard at work, determined to put into practice the reforms he had long since conceived. No one ever said he was infallible, we cannot say that everything he did was admirable, he has, moreover, no pretension to perfection; but he certainly did his level best,

and gave many proofs of initiative, goodwill, and intelligence. A born soldier, incessantly thinking of his army and how to improve it, he could not let a day pass without adding to the sum of work done. He even gave his attention to the ushers and messengers employed in the public offices, very properly thinking that retired soldiers really ought to have the preference for these situations. Thanks to his efforts in this direction, a greater number of military men were appointed, and this number has continued to increase ever since.

Another point to which he directed his attention was the question of honours, decorations, etc. After a careful study of the whole system, which had always been faulty, frequently unjust, and never really rational, he framed and introduced an entirely new set of rules, which received the approbation of all concerned. Every list of promotions that had hitherto appeared in the *Journal Officiel* had been followed by a series of claims, complaints, and recriminations, which got more bitter and more justified every year; the great evil was due, as everybody knew, to the total absence of principle in the distribution of these recompenses.

Boulanger remedied this state of things by drawing up a set of fixed rules, by which every officer, after a certain number of years' service, was bound to be nominated for the various grades of the Legion of Honour, according to the number of years' service, campaigns, wounds, etc., he had. Thus every officer with more than twenty years' service must be nominated for the Cross, all officers having been Knights for more than four years must be proposed for the grade of Officer, and all those who have been Officer of the order for more than twenty years must be proposed for the grade of Commander. The lists thus established are sent to the War Office, and there entered on one general list, on which all the candidates are classed by order of seniority. This list then serves to make the appointments in the Legion of Honour.

All competent military authorities were agreed in saying that the General must have had a strong dose of moral courage and disinterestedness to order these reforms. Though he might have remained absolutely free to distribute these grades and decorations as he thought fit, just as his predecessors had done, he voluntarily tied his own hands and deprived himself of all this power in order to settle the question on a just, equitable, and permanent basis.

In spite of this, the measure did not please his systematic adversaries, who accused him of wanting to curry favour with the Army, etc., etc. He was subjected to the bitterest attacks from these quarters.

But Boulanger was soon to be brought out of his military occupations to take part in political events. The Conservatives having obtained a great many seats at the various bye-elections, fondly imagined that France had again become a Conservative country, ready to entrust her destinies to one of their chiefs. They therefore continued their manifestations, increased in audacity, and, taking advantage of the liberty of the press, did not hesitate to announce that the Republic was doomed.

Their attacks became so violent, that in the early part of 1886 several Republican deputies proposed that the members of the families having reigned in France should be expelled from the country. A discussion took place in the Chamber, and after an explanation from M. de Freycinet, then Prime Minister, who thought there was no immediate need for exceptional measures, the Chamber rejected the motion for the immediate expulsion of the princes, and voted an order of the day expressing confidence in the Government, which had delared itself sufficiently armed by the ordinary laws to prevent any seditious manifestation.

This vote, very mild and indulgent, far from convincing the Conservatives of the Government's good-will, was looked upon by them as a proof of weakness, and they redoubled their attacks

and provocations. The situation became very strained, the quarrels more and more envenomed every day, when about the middle of May a fresh incident served to aggravate the state of things. The Comte de Paris' daughter Amélie was affianced to the Duc de Bragance, son of the King of Portugal. A grand *fête* was given by the Comte at his town house on the occasion of the marriage, for which he sent out thousands of invitations. The next day the Royalist journals did not hesitate to proclaim that this was the prelude to a restoration. "The Comte de Paris," said they, "the rightful heir to the French throne, knows how to pass from silence to action, when he thinks the time has come. Conservative France met yesterday, fortified in her faith and her hopes. There were assembled the complete elements of a grand government, with its princes, diplomatists, peers, deputies, councillors of state, functionaries, and intelligent youth; all the social forces in their most elevated and popular forms. It was like a powerful reserve, clearly showing what values and what resources our country possesses for future contingencies."

This interpretation of a private *fête* was certainly clear enough to dissipate any doubts that might still exist as to the attitude of the Royalists, who had chosen what they considered a favourable occasion for openly entering into opposition with the Republic duly constituted.

The Conservatives thought the time had come to take action; by a curious coincidence, the Republicans were of precisely the same opinion, and they immediately opened fire by proposing in the Chamber of Deputies that the chiefs of the families having reigned in France should be expelled from French territory. The motion was naturally carried by a large majority, and on the 22nd of June, 1886, the President of the Republic signed a decree, the first article of which ordained that the territory of the French Republic be prohibited to the chiefs of the families having reigned in France

and to their heirs in a direct line of primogeniture. Article four ordained that the members of the families having reigned in France could not enter the army or navy, nor exercise any public function or electoral mandate. The fourth article is interesting, as it explains how, later on, Boulanger came to be mixed up in the Duc d'Aumale affair.

By reason of his position as Minister of War, Boulanger's duty was to strike the Duc d'Aumale and the Duc de Chartres off the Army list. He cannot, of course, be considered responsible for the measure; he could do nothing else but carry out the terms of a law duly voted by the Legislature and promulgated by the President of the Republic. Far from harbouring any ill-feeling against them, Boulanger, on entering the cabinet, had refused to touch the royal dukes, and boldly announced that no politics should enter the Army, and that he had not to interfere with the position of the officers in question. But when the law of the 22nd of June was voted, he was, as we have said, bound to put it into execution; he therefore informed the parties interested. The Duc d'Aumale wrote what was considered by the Republicans as an insulting letter to the President of the Republic, who was equally innocent in the matter, a total stranger to the passing of the law, and the duke was expelled from the country.

On the 14th of July the National *Fête* was held, and the General was, according to all accounts, the hero of the review held that day at Longchamps.

As soon as the President of the Republic arrived, accompanied by his suite and the members of the Cabinet, all eyes were instinctively fixed on the young Minister, who was wearing a splendid uniform and rode a superb black charger, a thoroughbred animal, of which he was completely master. Accompanied by Generals Saussier and Roussel, and followed by the officers of his staff, Boulanger took his stand at the head of his troops. The re-

view, which was a great success, was the solemn consecration of the work already performed by the young and energetic Minister. The people and the Army, forgetting all previous discords, fraternized gaily, thinking of nothing but the future. Seeing themselves so strong, so full of courage and hope, they felt that decidedly France would not always remain crushed by the terrible defeat of 1870. All eyes sparkled with a feverish fire; the young patriots, crowding the fields of Longchamps, thought of their brothers across the frontier in Alsace-Lorraine. This juvenile faith, this enthusiastic patriotism, developed into something like delirium when they saw the superb black horse bearing the brilliant soldier, whose sudden, unexpected, and magical work had astonished the whole nation, and inspired all hearts with a patriotic confidence in the future of the country.

"*Vive le Général Boulanger!*"

This cry followed him everywhere, and was the just recompense for his life of bravery and hard work. Instinctively, the people felt themselves beloved by this man; as to the troops, they knew by experience that they could always reckon on General Boulanger.

It was also a triumph for an aged and valiant woman, who was present at the review, her face concealed beneath her mourning veil. Madame Boulanger, the General's mother, for it was she, was weeping tears of joy at the reception accorded to her son. She was, however, soon destined to weep other and bitter tears, at the sight of her son persecuted, dogged, outraged, and turned out of the Army by unworthy and unscrupulous enemies.

A credible witness has reported that when the *cortège*, consisting of the President of the Republic, the Ministers, and General Boulanger, set out on its return to Paris, there was one voice crying, "*Vive la République!*" two "*Vive Grévy!*" whilst a hundred roared "*Vive Boulanger!*"

The President continued to smile and bow to the public, but M.

de Freycinet turned as pale as a sheet. All the way to the *Elysée* it was the same thing, the crowd could see and would cheer no one but the General; and our informant registered the following prophetic remark:

"I venture to say that the Minister of War accumulated yesterday a rare stock of hatred against himself, and it is quite possible he may not pass the review next year."

Of course this prophecy was pretty safe, after all, when we consider the fleeting nature of ministerial functions under the beautiful parliamentary *régime*, the possession of which renders France an object of envy to all Europe!

The following day, the 15th of July, a debate which took place in the Chamber of Deputies concerning the Duc d'Aumale affair, gave rise to a duel between Baron de Lareinty, a Royalist deputy, and the General, the former having taken exception to some remarks the latter made respecting the Duc d'Aumale's letter. The Baron, in the course of a rather heated debate, having called Boulanger a coward, the latter naturally despatched his seconds to him.

"People may insult me," said Boulanger, "say that I am leading the Army to ruin, anything they like; I don't care. But call me a coward! No, never! And there is nothing that can prevent me fighting this duel."

A duel with pistols was arranged, and took place at Meudon, in the Parc de Chalais. The combat was a dangerous one, at twenty-five paces, with two minutes allowed for taking aim. Under these circumstances the duel could hardly result anything but seriously for one or the other of the combatants, and perhaps for both. But before taking his place opposite the Baron, the General dropped the cock of his pistol, thus rendering it inoffensive. He then took up his position, waited, and allowed Baron de Lareinty to fire. The latter having fired and missed him, the General handed his

pistol to one of the seconds, who was obliged to admit that he had not fired, and that voluntarily. The cap was not even touched by the cock. The pistol was afterwards discharged by one of the seconds into a field of clover. In the official account of the duel, it was stated, out of regard for Baron de Lareinty, that the General had fired, but that his pistol made a flash in the pan. But the truth was, the General, acting with his usual bravery, had stood his adversary's fire without returning it. The two men afterwards shook hands with the utmost cordiality, and the incident came to a close, for a time at least.

But the Royalists, stung to the quick by the expulsion of the Duc d'Aumale, determined to vent their spite on the General, who, as we have seen, was not responsible for the act. A few days after the departure of the Duke, the newspapers devoted to his cause published a letter said to have been written to him by General Boulanger whilst the latter was under his orders as colonel. This letter, quite worthy of a cringing courtier, contained the epithet "Royal Highness" four times, and was written in ridiculously humble and obsequious terms. Boulanger denied the authenticity of this letter, and was quite right to do so, for it was afterwards proved to be a forgery, invented to bolster up a bad case. Those who "manipulated" it were, however, obliged to produce the original, which resembled in no way the letter first published with such a flourish of trumpets. The words "Royal Highness" were not in the original at all. The General simply thanked his old commander, the Duc d'Aumale, for having proposed him as Brigadier-general; and could not have done less, that being the universal custom in the service, as every officer knows. Besides, General Boulanger did not in any way owe his promotion to the Duc d'Aumale, for the latter had overwhelmed him with bad notes in his reports, describing him as an ill-bred man, and, above all, too much of a friend to the common soldier. But notwith-

standing this, Colonel Boulanger owed a letter of thanks to the Duke, his superior, and he only did his strict duty in writing it.

About this time there appeared a biography of the General, written by an anonymous author, which created great excitement in the capital. Great efforts were made to discover the author, but without avail; they could only find out that the lucky man had quickly earned a bundle of bank notes with this little pamphlet of a dozen pages. It created such a *furore* and gave rise to so many comments that the General was obliged to prohibit its sale; but hundreds of thousands of copies had been sold before that could be done. This biography contained a description of the General as he was then, which we will take the liberty of transcribing, so as to show the impression he had made at that time on the public.

"Physically, he is a handsome man; of medium height, well built, he has every appearance of youth and vigour. His face indicates the cool courage of which he has just given a proof in the duel with Baron de Lareinty. His blue eyes are bright and clear, and his nose, of pure design, surmounts a thick moustache, which rejoins a beard, concealing a mouth which rarely smiles, except when the General gives place to the family man; for this valiant soldier, brave as a lion, and covered with wounds, so strict and severe when on duty, is the kindest of fathers, and, like all strong men, very indulgent with children. His forehead, very broad and massive, is crowned by auburn hair, and the *ensemble* of his appearance clearly denotes the military man."

Other pamphlets were published about this time; Paris and the provinces were inundated with Boulangist literature, favourable and unfavourable. These were attributed to the Royalists, who could not forgive him for the Aumale affair, and to Republicans who saw with alarm the growing popularity of the young Minister of War whom they themselves had introduced into political life.

But, far from injuring the General, they only served to increase his popularity, which has always been propagated at the expense of his enemies, who then, as now, were a positive blessing in disguise.

Notwithstanding the passionate attacks of these beneficent enemies, the General continued his task of reorganization, and not a day passed without some good work being done. When he was not at the Ministry elaborating some reform, he was visiting schools, inspecting various garrisons, encouraging the gymnastic societies by his presence, and awakening the military spirit of the entire army by his speech, countenance, and sympathy.

About this time occurred the Saussier incident, which served to embitter the latter's feelings against the General, and to lead him to permanently adopt a hostile attitude towards him.

A Conservative journal having published an article reflecting on the administrative service under the orders of General Saussier, then, as now, Governor of Paris, the latter considered it his duty to make a public reply to this attack, and wrote a letter, in which he warmly defended his subordinates, so unjustly attacked. There is no doubt that in acting thus the Governor of Paris yielded to a feeling natural to a soldier jealous of the reputation and dignity of the men under his orders ; but had he reflected, he would have seen that he was infringing one of the strictest rules in the Army, which prohibits officers from publishing anything whatever without the consent of the Minister of War.

The latter could not, however, follow Saussier's example, and forget his duty also. As he said at the time :

"The higher the officer stands in rank, the more careful he should be to obey the rules and regulations of the service ; his conduct should always be irreproachable, so as to serve as an example to those beneath him."

He therefore addressed a letter of blame to General Saussier, who was so irritated that he at once threatened to resign ; but

he being a capable, hard-working, well-conducted officer, useful to his country, the entire Cabinet begged him to reconsider his decision, and to withdraw his resignation. This he did, and appeared to adopt a courteous, deferential attitude towards the Minister of War; but at heart the incident still rankled in his mind, and he has certainly never forgiven Boulanger for fulfilling what was, after all, a strict duty, so that he has always remained one of his most determined enemies. However, the General can afford to say of Saussier's enmity what some one said of the little dog's bark, "It pleases him, and does not hurt me."

This was not the first time Boulanger had been obliged to display his severity. General Schmitz, commanding the 9th Army Corps, had been guilty of the same breach of military discipline as General Saussier. He sent a telegram to the *Figaro* protesting against allegations to the effect that he had not properly defended his officers who had been accused of conspiring against the Government. For having sent this telegram without first obtaining the consent of the Minister of War, General Schmitz was deprived of his command.

Whilst jealous colleagues and officers who had not been promoted quick enough to suit themselves were trying to pull the General down, the military authorities of other nations were watching his career with the utmost interest, especially in Germany and England. General Wolseley, speaking of Boulanger at the Horse Guards mess, said:

"It is evident that the French Army has at last found a Minister of War who is working resolutely and passionately, and who has given us more than one excellent example worthy of being followed. He is keeping public opinion in France constantly on the alert; and we may say that he is a source of real anxiety to the Germans. He is not perhaps the man of 'the last button on the gaiter,' like one of his imperial predecessors, but he is certainly

quite equal to the responsibility he has undertaken, and we can clearly foresee that his country will be indebted to him for the reorganization of her Army."

By a curious coincidence, just about the time that "our only general" was thus eulogising Boulanger, we had drawn the latter's attention to Wolseley's "Soldier's Pocket-Book," and sent him a copy of it. We presume that he fully appreciated the merits of this work, for he shortly afterwards asked us to send him another copy.

Though the Germans systematically insulted him, and even burned his effigy, they never denied his military ability, nor the part he had played in the reorganization of the Army, and always fully admitted him to be well worthy of the confidence reposed in him by the French nation. This feeling of absolute confidence penetrated the minds of all classes of the community, and explains the widespread popularity enjoyed by the General. Of course it would be absurd to say that Boulanger was the only one capable of commanding the French Army, that he was superior to all the other generals put together, or that he was indispensable; but we are bound to admit that his efforts, personal qualities, and unflagging energy enabled him to work in the most efficacious way for the development of the country's military forces.

The next important question that occupied the attention of the Minister of War was the organization of the Naval and Military Club. All the European capitals and many French provincial towns possessed clubs for the convenience of the officers; but in Paris there was no place where they could meet for social intercourse and enjoy the benefits possessed by their comrades abroad and in the provinces. Up to that time the military officers had made a sort of headquarters and *rendezvous* of the *Café de la Paix*, where they were always treated with special deference, whilst the naval officers met at the *Café du Helder*. Of late years,

however, this establishment has not maintained the position it once occupied in this respect, for a variety of reasons. Be that as it may, Boulanger determined to furnish the officers with a place worthy of them, and which would release them from the tyranny of *café* and hotel-keepers. Being generally obliged to frequent second-class hotels, on account of the modesty of their resources, the officers were frequently exposed to very compromising meetings, not at all flattering for the uniform they wore, in the small and ill-frequented hotels where they were obliged to stay.

After various suggestions, the club was ultimately installed in the house formerly occupied by the Splendide Hotel, the handsome building nearly abutting the *Place de l'Opéra*, in the heart of Paris, one of the most magnificent sites to be found even in that city of magnificent streets. The organizers were fortunate enough to commence operations by a stroke of rare good fortune. The proprietor of the hotel having been declared bankrupt, they obtained for 400,000 francs what had originally cost 1,440,000 francs. Beside that, the place was entirely fitted up, so that very few alterations were required to transform it into a club. The saloons were soon decorated with trophies of all sorts—cuirasses, guns, and arms of every description.

All officers stationed in Paris are obliged to belong to the club, but with the rest it is an optional affair. The subscription is very low, generals paying sixty, officers between the rank of general and colonel thirty, and the rest twenty-four francs per annum. The breakfast was fixed at three francs, and the dinner at four francs. Regimental dinners can be served at the club, and bedrooms are set apart for officers making a temporary stay in Paris. Another grave question was raised just before the inauguration of the establishment. Could they let rooms to married officers, and thus receive them and their families into the club? The question was discussed, and the committee came to the conclusion that

they could not let rooms to this class of members; they therefore made arrangements with hotels in the neighbourhood to let them comfortable rooms at the same price as at the club.

The inauguration took place on the 1st of July, and something like eight thousand guests defiled through the splendid series of rooms, full of admiration for the wonders worked by the organizing committee: the whole place, lighted up with the electric light, and decorated with perfect taste by Commandant Paul Merle, presented a marvellous appearance.

The Ministers, the Ambassadors, all present were equally delighted, and the club was formally declared open by Boulanger, in his official capacity as Minister of War.

This was the official ceremony, but on the 16th of July another and more imposing inauguration was arranged. During the preceding fortnight, the General had had the review, the affair of the princes, and his duel, and all these things had greatly increased his popularity. The torchlight procession arranged by the military authorities paraded the streets in the neighbourhood of the Military Club, followed by an enthusiastic crowd crying "*Vive l'Armée!*" The club was crowded with military men in brilliant uniforms, and the General, who arrived about ten o'clock, was received with the utmost enthusiasm, and soon became the central attraction of the ceremony. He only remained half an hour; when he went away enthusiastic crowds followed him crying, "*Vive Boulanger!*" "*Vive l'Armée!*"

Had the *fête* been given in honour of Boulanger it could not have been more flattering for him; and the newspapers were not slow to remark the purely personal significance of the ceremony. The *Figaro* could not help smiling at the disagreeable effect this immense popularity was sure to produce on Boulanger's fellow Ministers. The *Matin*, commenting on the enthusiasm excited by the General, said that he was following in the footsteps of the two

Buonapartes, and that these popular manifestations proved that the country, tired of the incapable Governments which every fresh crisis produced, wanted a change.

A few weeks after this the foreign officers who had been present at the autumn manœuvres were hospitably entertained at the club by the General, who made a cordial speech of welcome, and assured them of the pleasure it gave him to receive them.

Another subject which received Boulanger's attention was the question of the common soldier's food, he being of Wellington's opinion, that a general who wants good soldiers must pay particular attention to the commissariat department.

"Formerly," says M. Barbou in his excellent work treating of this subject, "the common soldier looked upon garrison life with horror; military servitude seemed to him so hard that he frequently mutilated himself in order to escape it. Badly fed, badly dressed, implacably punished, this soldier, artisan of the national glories, was really miserable. Everything was expected from him in time of peace as in time of war, but he received in exchange no compensation, and had none of those brilliant privileges which act as a stimulant to the officers.

"Every one being called upon to perform military service, the Minister's first care ought to have been to improve the soldier's food, and relieve him from the monotonous and eternal soup. When it was not soup it was stew; and the stew only disappeared to make way for soup, a vicious circle which ultimately ruined the most robust stomachs. No previous Minister had thought it possible to feed the army in any other way.

"This soup was served twice a day in a tin can, the lid of which served as a plate, and in which was heaped pell-mell meat, soup, bread, and vegetables. One single spoon served to absorb this horrible mixture. As to the meat, they fished it out with their fingers, and this rendered dining a very untidy, not to say dirty,

function. The stew was an ordinary mutton stew, with as many beans, carrots, potatoes, etc., as possible.

"But this diet was naturally fatiguing to the stomach, so that after the first few months the soldiers got tired of it, and threw half their soup or stew away. Obliged to re-establish the balance in some way, they would buy bad wine, and thus a great many took to drinking.

"Boulanger, fully aware of the evils wrought by this bad system, had seriously meditated on it, and determined to discover a remedy.

"'Find,' said he to the authorities, 'something else. Do what you like, but improve matters. I will do all I can to assist you.'

"Everything soon changed, as if by enchantment. The colonels of regiments, released from the tyranny of a code of rules which hampered them, and prevented them making the best of their resources, invented, combined, improved, and worked in such a way that the system of feeding the troops is now changed for the better throughout the army.

"The soldiers now sit down to table for each meal; the various viands are served up in soup tureens, dishes, and plates, with knives, forks, and spoons, and even nice clean tablecloths, made of white American cloth, always kept clean and inviting."

The curious part of the affair is that the whole thing does not cost the Government a single farthing extra, although the food served is good, well-cooked, copious, and varied; as good, in fact, as in a great many public institutions.

Thus this transformation, as radical as it was beneficial, which no previous Minister had obtained, has established in military life the relative equality of treatment as it exists amongst civilians. The barracks, which had been a sort of prison to people accustomed to a fairly easy life, is now supportable to all, and even agreeable to the poorer classes, a thing which is, after all, of the utmost impor-

tance in a country where every man is obliged to spend a certain time in the army.

Besides a sufficient quantity of bread, meat, sugar, and coffee, the State allows twopence per day per head for the rest of the soldier's food. It is with this extremely modest sum that the General contrived to work this great and permanent reform, which is appreciated twice a day every day in the year by every man in an army which numbers millions.

Can it be wondered at that the man who caused this to be done should be so popular, seeing that the ordinary Minister of War, engaged in the arduous task of intriguing to maintain himself on good terms with the various "groups" in the Chamber, would never have thought of this, to him, vulgar reform?

Boulanger may also claim the credit of having introduced the Lebel gun, invented by Lieutenant-colonel Lebel, Director of the Musketry School at Chalons. After numerous experiments, the gallant officer had succeeded in perfecting his rifle, and also a cartouche, the powder of which produced little or no smoke.

Rifle and cartouche were tried, pronounced by the experts to be perfect, and definitely adopted for the French army. General Boulanger immediately set about arranging for the rapid manufacture of the new weapon on a large scale; credits were asked for and obtained, and the work went on so quickly, that France was, in this respect, far ahead of Austria and Germany, who were still experimenting to discover the best model of rifle when she was already manufacturing her latest, improved invention.

Many other reforms were effected which benefited the common soldier in some way or another. His bedding was improved; his uniform made lighter and better adapted to his wants; regular leave of absence was granted to well-conducted men, and was a reward to them and a relief to the regimental budget; the useless Sunday morning review was suppressed, thus giving the soldier a

full day's rest every week; a thousand little things were done which, without in any way impairing the efficiency of the army, alleviated the monotony and dreariness of a soldier's life.

The fact is, the General was looked upon as something more than a Minister of War. Other Ministers may have organized and administered the army with as much ability and distinction, but Boulanger had a greater merit; he understood, better than any of his predecessors, not only the strength but the weak points of the modern French army. He personified it, was its very incarnation, so that his policy, his administration, and his whole person appeared as the perfect symbol of the French military spirit of the day.

In all his reforms there was a practical side, a strong feeling of justice, a remarkable knowledge of the soldier's wants and of the actual social state of the nation. In France the Army is not a caste, it is the nation itself; it is therefore highly important that the soldier should be treated as a citizen, that is to say, as a free man, cheerfully fulfilling what may be considered as the most sacred of all duties, the defence of his country.

But the Minister's attention was not absorbed by what some might call small details, for during his stay in office the numerous military laws and projects elaborated since 1870 were brought together, collated, and welded into one homogeneous military law, which was presented to Parliament by Boulanger. Some of the principal clauses of the bill were:

1. Forced and personal military service, with certain exceptions necessitated by the social wants of the nation.

2. The three years' service.

3. All future officers to spend a year in some regiment before entering the military school.

4. The unification of pay, by which soldiers of all arms receive the same sum per day.

5. Various privileges accorded to non-commissioned officers, in order to induce them to remain in the service.

He brought in a law against spies, and a new and improved plan for the promotion of officers; schemes for military ballooning, carrier pigeons, and the formation of a military bicycle corps.

Soon after this he was busily engaged in arranging for the autumn manœuvres, for which he drew up a very important set of regulations, differing from those usually issued on such occasions. The General's idea was to give commanding officers greater latitude in the handling of their troops. Instead of saying to them, "You are to go to such a place, by such a route, in a given time," he simply said: "The idea is so and so. You have to go to such a spot; get there how you can, as if in actual warfare."

His great care was, as usual, for the health and well-being of the soldiers, and after the manœuvres were over, instead of winding up with compliments all round, he did not hesitate to criticise certain points which he and the competent authorities considered defective, thus enabling the officers at fault to meditate on the mistakes made, and to profit by them next time.

We have already referred to the steps taken by the General to recompense those who had distinguished themselves in the accomplishment of their military duties. He still remained faithful to the same principles, and drew up a code of rules for the ceremonial to be observed on the delivery of the insignia of the Legion of Honour and other decorations to those who had gained them.

He thus confirmed his constant desire to sustain the *esprit de corps* amongst all classes in the army, he being fully convinced of the necessity of such a thing, especially for the French temperament, so jealous of everything that touches their personal honour or the glory of the nation.

All his efforts tended to honour any man who had distinguished

himself in the service of his country. This has its practical utility; a conscript's duty being to imitate the best examples, the duty of his superiors is to place such examples before his eyes in the most attractive way.

Another measure ordained by the General gave the greatest satisfaction throughout the country. Formerly the arrival of recruits at the depôt was a melancholy, painful affair, and the conscript, always young and often inexperienced, fresh from his native village, entered the *caserne* as if it were a prison, and would, had he been acquainted with his classics, have thought of Dante's entrance into purgatory. To obviate this state of things, the General ordered that every detachment of recruits should be met at the station by the regimental band, and accompanied to the barracks playing lively martial tunes. The cordial reception the recruits met with dried their tears, filled them with enthusiasm for their new profession, and even comforted the weeping mothers, who forgot the grief of separation and the thought that they might never see their sons any more.

In November, 1886, the General inaugurated an Orphanage for the children of non-commissioned officers and soldiers. This orphanage was built and endowed by Commander Heriot, the proprietor of the *Magasins du Louvre*, and handed over that day to General Boulanger, as representative of the Government. Not long after this the unfortunate Heriot was sequestrated by his friends, who declared him to be insane. For a considerable time no one felt certain that such was really the case, but lately the Government has taken the matter up; he has been removed from the custody of his friends and placed in the hands of independent people. A remark made by him as he was driving to his new home was very significant.

"Ah!" said he, "if I hadn't this immense fortune, I should be a free man!"

This remark appears to us to denote a sanity of mind of which a great many people could not boast.

Boulanger, destined to enjoy all the sweets of popularity, was once threatened with the treatment dear to Lucrezia Borgia and sultans anxious to remove in a delicate manner any one who stands in their way. A Republican deputy is reported to have said :

"I am not rich, but I would willingly give twenty thousand francs to any one who would put a little poison into Boulanger's cup of coffee ! "

As soon as he heard of this witty remark, the General, greatly amused, invited the spiritual deputy to dinner with him, so as to give him a chance of doctoring his coffee himself. Naturally this affair created a great sensation, and the comic journals were full of pictures showing the deputy in the act of offering the famous cup of coffee to the General, who naturally declines it with the most gracious of smiles.

About this time M. de Freycinet was overthrown on the question of the sub-prefects ; his adversaries, the Conservatives and the Radicals, having proposed that these functionaries should be abolished. The Prime Minister, opposed to this, made it a Cabinet question, got beaten on a division, and resigned. To show the sincerity of the majority, and the beauties of the French Parliamentary system, we may mention that the new Ministry maintained the sub-prefects in all their glory, and those decorative gentlemen are still as firm in their positions as ever.

The President of the Republic, convinced that the coalition which had overthrown M. de Freycinet could not form a Cabinet, called upon M. Goblet, who had formed part of the fallen Ministry, to do so. He accepted, and on the 11th of December the new Cabinet was formed, the General being maintained as Minister of War. This latter step was fully approved of by all parties and

the public, the Conservative deputies themselves doing full justice to the efforts of the Minister to reorganize the army.

Boulanger soon developed into a good orator, lighting up his demonstrations by a phrase or a joke, never wandering from the point, or losing himself in useless considerations; in fact, he showed himself quite as capable with his tongue and pen as with the sword, an indispensable thing for a reforming Minister.

Under this Ministry he introduced other reforms, one of the most important being the law respecting the fortresses on the frontiers.

Another improvement due to his initiative is the change in the rules of manœuvring, tending to developing action on the offensive throughout the Army.

The reason of the change was simply this, offensive tactics are the only ones which enable an army to obtain decisive results. This principle, the expression of which is to be found in the regulations, serves as basis to the military education and as a guide in all exercises and manœuvres. After all, in real war, once hostilities have commenced, the great point is to seek the enemy's principal army, and attack it on every possible occasion. War is always an offensive affair. It is therefore in view of the offensive that the tactical regulations should be conceived and drawn up.

Boulanger, during the whole time he was Minister of War, received every one who called on him, rich and poor alike, the only exception being the Army contractors, whom he invariably sent to the chiefs of the various departments. As an illustration of this we may quote the following anecdote.

As he was blaming a sub-commissary for not having received a petitioner who had applied direct to him, the officer laid the blame on the office messenger. The latter, called up, stammered some excuse about the petitioner being all in rags.

"All the more reason," cried the irritated Minister. "You are

wrong both ways." Then pointing to an old woman sweeping the streets outside, he added,—

"If that old woman came to speak to me, I should receive her as well as if she were some grand lady. As a Minister, I consider myself to be at her service."

As may be supposed, every one was astonished at this attitude, but after reflecting, they were touched by his consideration for poor people. Though occupying such a high position, he never thought of denying his origin, a thing which is somewhat rare amongst men of his class.

He soon afterwards had another occasion for displaying his humane, democratic principles. The strike at the Decazeville Mines had just broken out, and certain capitalists would have liked to see the energetic intervention of the military, but General Boulanger was not a man to lend himself to such a monstrous thing. He did not hesitate to speak as follows in the Chamber:

"Personally, I should look upon as a calamity any possibility of a conflict between our soldiers and the miners, and I have done everything in my power to prevent such a misfortune. I appeal to the honourable M. Camelinat, who is personally aware of the excellent, cordial relations existing between the military, the gendarmes, and the inhabitants of Decazeville. Each soldier is now perhaps sharing his bread and soup with a miner."

On the 27th of April, 1887, the whole country was thrown into a state of fever by the news that M. Schnæbelé, the Commissary of Police of a town on the Franco-German frontier, had been lured into an ambuscade, arrested, and imprisoned at Metz. An apology was demanded and obtained through diplomatic channels; but the Foreign Minister would never have been able to insist on the Germans liberating the Commissary had not Boulanger's firm attitude convinced them that France was fully prepared to avenge this unprovoked insult.

The Germans prudently drew back when they heard that steps were being taken by the Minister of War to guarantee the inviolability of the French frontier, and, in case of need, to settle the question by an appeal to arms.

This incident afforded Boulanger another occasion for displaying his prudence, decision of character, and powers of rapid organization. It cannot be denied, however, that it was an extremely anxious moment, a time of great mental anguish; for the General knew that any imprudent word, any false step on his part, might have plunged the two countries into a war compared with which that of 1870 was a mere military promenade.

Even the Minister's numerous enemies admitted that he had displayed wonderful tact, prudence, and regard for the nation's honour in the settlement of this delicate question.

But signs were not wanting that for every reform he effected, every success he scored, Boulanger was creating a stock of enemies, who were not long in making themselves heard. Some accused him of being a permanent cause of danger with Germany; certain deputies said he was scouring the provinces to talk politics when he ought to be in Paris attending to his military duties; others were of opinion that he paid too much attention to nursing his popularity; whilst many did not hesitate to boldly declare that if things continued in this way for long, France would soon be saddled with a dictator of the Napoleon type.

Those who had long looked upon the clericals as the real enemy now began to forsake that fad, and transferred their attention to Boulanger. Grévy, the President of the Republic, saw with a very anxious eye the increasing popularity of this young, pushing, and capable Minister, and began to ask himself whether he was not just a little in danger of losing his lucrative post. Daniel Wilson, who could not do much good in his decorations business with a man like Boulanger, naturally thought he

ought not to be maintained; so did Clémenceau, who found his popularity in Paris gradually waning and becoming beautifully less. In fact, he began to fear that his political situation might disappear, and thus oblige him to quit his pleasant position as Cabinet maker and breaker, and return to Montmartre and resume his duties as doctor to his lost electors. Deputies, whose plans for "little jobs" had not been entertained by Boulanger—and men of this class swarmed in the late Chamber—joined the various chiefs; so that it was not long before it got whispered abroad that the Cabinet was doomed, and that it was Boulanger who was stopping the way. The idea that the General ought to have been left in office, if only to finish the great work of reorganization he had so well commenced, never occurred to these short-sighted politicians, who could see nothing but their own petty, private interests.

The fifteen months that Boulanger spent at the Ministry of War created for him a popularity which withstood the crucial test of ridicule, slander, and insult, three things which have proved fatal to many a popular idol, and he came out scathless from the searching criticisms, misrepresentations, and insults of witty and unscrupulous enemies. Public attention was constantly fixed on him, the French and foreign journals were full of his doings, and "the fierce light that beats about a throne" was a common candle compared to the powerful illuminator that was constantly focussed on him.

A thing which struck impartial observers was the curious way in which the French press veered round at a certain moment. Several organs which had ardently supported him at the commencement of his ministerial career became, later on, his most determined enemies; whilst others, which had at first overwhelmed him with sarcasms and insults, afterwards took up his defence in the most courageous way. A list of the newspapers which thus changed their opinions would form a very interesting study, and

would naturally possess a double interest could the real reasons for changing be stated. We fear, however, that it would be very difficult to induce the interested parties to unburden themselves to that extent.

The General's popularity was spread by various other means. His biographies and portraits were sold by hundreds of thousands, and songs were sung in his honour and praise throughout the country. The sempiternal "*En revenant de la Revue*" was produced about this time; Villemer, the popular writer of patriotic poetry, commenced his famous series of songs of which the General was the hero, and which delicately played on the patriotic, chauvinistic chord, always so sensitive in every Frenchman's breast. These songs were eagerly bought in all parts of the country, and helped to create a legend around the General's name which nothing can now efface.

Itinerant merchants found a ready sale for Boulanger medals, five-franc pieces with Boulanger's effigy, Boulanger scarf-pins, Boulanger hats, etc., etc. His portrait was carved on pipes, so that every civilian and every soldier could indulge in the luxury of colouring the well-known features of the popular Minister of War. This is, in fact, one of the best proofs of his really boundless popularity. A popular idol in France passes through several stages: he is first portrayed in the coloured pictures of which Epinal has the monopoly; then his name is attached to some drink, or his portrait is done on bottles; and, lastly, his features are carved on pipes. Gambetta had the coloured pictures, Grévy gave his name to a bitters; but Thiers was the only one who attained the honour of having his classic features carved on pipes. Boulanger therefore reached the height of popularity in this direction, and had the pleasure to learn that these pipes were considered as seditious in Germany, no one being allowed to sell them.

But if the people had their portraits in a popular shape, the

upper classes also had theirs. The 1886 *Salon* alone contained nearly a hundred portraits of the popular man. He was represented on horseback, on foot, with his beard, without his beard, in full uniform, in *mufti*, at work, fighting a duel, bowing to the public, making a speech in the House; in short, in every possible position. Sculptors sent him in marble, bronze, terra-cotta, and other materials; he was, as Victor Hugo said of Buonaparte, everywhere, and this plethora of portraits gave rise to a series of amusing pictures and articles which we regret to be unable to reproduce.

All sorts and conditions of men made capital out of his popularity, naturally increasing it at the same time. Phrenologists examined his interesting bumps, and published the results of their investigations; thought-readers dived into the inmost recesses of his heart, and plucked from his very soul the dreams he was or was not indulging in. Graphologists spent their nights and days in studying his handwriting, and discovered in him qualities of intellect, soul, will, and intuition which positively astonished the General himself.

Professors of palmistry manipulated his lily-white hand, discovered lines of ambition, tenacity, and superhuman will which would have satisfied Cæsar or Napoleon, and amorous propensities which would have certainly attracted Cleopatra's attention and made Antony sit up, had Boulanger lived in those rollicking times. Modern witches and sorcerers, manipulators of the magic cards and the not less magic coffee grounds, discovered in these mediums wonderful and fearful things, and predicted for the General a career compared to which that of Napoleon was a mere humdrum, monotonous existence.

CHAPTER IX.

HIS DEPARTURE FROM PARIS AND STAY AT CLERMONT-FERRAND.

AS we hinted in the previous chapter, Boulanger was fast becoming too great a favourite with the public; the very Ministers and Deputies who had introduced him into political life now bitterly repented having done so, began to revile him, and to whine that he was "stealing their popularity." Notwithstanding the insults of the newspapers, the shocking caricatures published by prints inspired by his own colleagues, the Minister of War not only maintained his position, but his popularity increased daily. A great many attempts had been made to prevent him from entering the Goblet Cabinet; when that Minister fell, still greater efforts were made to exclude him from the next combination. The ministerial crisis lasted thirteen days, during which the country remained without a government, until, on the 13th of May, a Cabinet was at last formed by Maurice Rouvier, who entrusted the Ministry of War to General Ferron. The Opportunists, the Wilsons, and the Clémenceaus now heaved a sigh of relief, confidently supposing that they had succeeded with wonderful cleverness in getting rid of their redoubtable and troublesome nightmare.

Had the General acted according to the usual course pursued by the War Ministers who have succeeded each other with such

lightning rapidity during the last fifteen years, he would have intrigued for a step in rank and a decoration, taken command of some Army corps, and disappeared from the political scene into complete oblivion.

But he overthrew all the clever calculations of his quondam friends by doing nothing of the kind. His popularity actually survived his retirement from office; people were more anxious than ever to know what he was doing, what he thought of the situation, and what future course he intended to adopt. His biography was sold as much as ever, his portraits were just as popular, and the songs in his honour were still eagerly bought throughout the country, especially in Alsace-Lorraine, where the inhabitants had almost got to look upon him as a political Messiah, destined to save France, and restore them to their mother country.

Meantime the General continued his usual mode of life at the Hôtel du Louvre, not working quite so hard, it is true, but receiving his friends and admirers—he had then no partisans, in the political sense of the word,—and taking a well-earned rest after his labours at the War Office. He now had time to visit his friends, to lunch and dine with them; and from this time forth his invitations were so numerous, that those who wanted to entertain him were obliged to inform him a fortnight in advance. A year later, a month's notice was required, and even then he could not satisfy half his friends.

But the members of the Government could not leave the General in peace; his popularity annoyed them, his social successes filled them with jealous rage, and they put their precious heads together to concoct a plan for totally extinguishing this troublesome man, who persisted in maintaining his popular position despite the presidential ukase decreeing him to be demolished once for all. They were positively wild to see that the more they persecuted him the more he liked it, the more good it did him in the eyes

of the public; that after dealing him what they fondly imagined to be the most crushing blows, he always came up more smiling than ever.

After various consultations between the Ministers, MM. Grévy, Wilson, Clémenceau, and other shining lights of the Government clique, of which consultations the General was duly informed by friends "in the movement," these sorry statesmen determined to order him to go and take command of the 13th Army Corps at Clermont-Ferrand. This nomination was communicated to the Press with such feverish haste, that the General read it in the newspapers before he received the official notice from the Ministry of War.

"They can't do even such a simple thing as this without blundering," he remarked on receiving the ministerial communication. "They don't seem to be aware I am not obliged to accept a command until a year after having quitted office. But they are in such a terrible hurry to get rid of me, that they do an illegal thing, and expose themselves to a smart rebuff."

However, the General, full of respect for military discipline, if not for his temporary chiefs, determined to accept the appointment and to leave for Clermont-Ferrand, merely giving himself time to arrange his personal affairs before quitting the capital, the scene of so many triumphs. One of the reasons for which the Government wanted to get rid of him so quickly was, that they feared some disturbance at the review on the 14th of July, at which the General would naturally not be present. They were positively at their wit's end, being quite unable to invent a decent pretext for stopping the review. One Minister proposed that it should be stopped "on account of the heat," but a colleague very pertinently remarked, "How can you hope to deceive the public with such a tale as that, just as we are sending 2,000 men out to Tonkin?"

This rendered the first Minister very thoughtful, and even a trifle

melancholy; for his brilliant idea being impracticable, he was as far from a solution as ever. Giving the thing up in despair, they decided to hold the review and to trust to chance, a rather risky proceeding on the part of a Government which has always been pursued by the very demon of ill-luck. As to Boulanger, he was quite indifferent as to what they did, knowing full well that he was safe in the hearts of the people, and that nothing the Government could do would alter his position. As he said,—

"Should war be declared, I shall be forced to go. Not only Paris, but all France would be unanimous in crying out for Boulanger!"

Up to the last moment the Government was very perplexed, not knowing what his intentions were as to his departure. At last he formally announced that he intended to leave for Clermont-Ferrand on the 8th of July, by the 8.7 p.m. train from the Gare de Lyon. Naturally all the newspapers published this interesting piece of news, and the Parisian public prepared to give their favourite General a cordial "send-off."

Long before five p.m. on the 8th, an immense crowd besieged the Gare de Lyon, and literally stormed the place; in fact, the station was taken by assault exactly as if it had been a hostile city; the crowd reigned supreme everywhere. At the Hôtel du Louvre there was a similar crowd waiting for the General to appear, and at half-past seven exactly he drove out, followed by three other carriages, containing his friends. They were obliged to wait quite five minutes, during which time the people roared out "*Vive Boulanger!*" "*Vive l'Armée!*" "*À bas Grévy!*" with the stentorian lungs and wild enthusiasm for which a French crowd is famous.

Having contrived to get away at last, the General drove rapidly to the Gare de Lyon, followed by his friends in the carriages and thousands of others on foot, the latter being reinforced by hundreds all along the route, until they arrived at the railway station.

Here the General met another crowd, which had been waiting for him, so that he had the utmost difficulty in getting on to the platform. Had it not been for the police, who behaved very well, he never could have got into the station. But that was the last effort made by the police, the entire crowd having now forced its way inside the station, determined to see the last of their favourite at any price.

With the utmost difficulty Boulanger and his friends made their way to the carriage reserved for them; the whole train was surrounded by a black, human mass, composed of all classes of society, singing Boulangist songs, and roaring out, *Vive Boulanger! Il reviendra! Il reviendra!*

There were now people, not only on the platform and on the carriage steps, but also on the tops of the carriages, on the engine, on the other trains; in fact, wherever there was a foothold or a chance of clinging by the skin of the teeth, there the enthusiastic Boulangists were to be found, helping to swell the general cry,—"*Il reviendra!*" "*Il reviendra!*"

At this moment there were quite three thousand people standing in front of the engine, determined that Boulanger should not leave Paris. The engine itself was covered with his portraits, Boulangist songs, etc., etc.; whilst in every vacant space enthusiasts had chalked up: *Vive Boulanger! À bas Grévy! Il reviendra!*

Naturally the comic element was sure to make its appearance on such an occasion. One agile member of the Patriotic League had climbed up to the very roof of the station, just above the General's carriage, and there performed a series of gymnastic feats, which did him the utmost credit, and greatly amused the crowd.

Another gentleman improved the shining hour and combined business with patriotic pleasure by relieving one of the late Minister's friends of his gold watch.

As to the General himself, he could not but be pleased at this outburst of popular enthusiasm, but he was positively stifled in the stuffy carriage, surrounded by eager partisans, and was obliged to ask the latter to allow him to get out and take a walk along the platform.

He got out, and the people made way for him, but closed in again as soon as he had gone past, so that he had no necessity to walk, the crowd carried him off his feet.

He did not get much fresh air by this movement. At length he found his feet again, and resumed walking ; but instead of returning to the carriage, as the crowd thought he would, he went through a passage and mounted a light engine which was standing there with steam up. The driver whistled, but the crowd made no signs of moving, in fact, about a hundred climbed on to the engine and tender, clinging to all parts of it. However, seeing that the locomotive was on the move, their instinct of self-preservation asserted itself, and they gave way. The General left the station in this way amid an overwhelming cry of, "*Vive Boulanger !*" "*Il reviendra !*" "*Il reviendra !*" He got off the locomotive at Villeneuve Saint-Georges, where he joined the express which was to take him to Clermont-Ferrand.

It was quite time the General should leave, for he was literally exhausted ; besides that, there were ten or a dozen trains waiting outside Paris for the good pleasure of the partisans of the popular idol. The Boulangists then left the station, and filed off in various directions, whilst the General and his staff sped on towards Clermont-Ferrand.

Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, there were a great many people at the various stations through which the train passed ; they all cheered lustily, and appeared anxious to see the man who had been made the victim of ministerial imbecility.

The General arrived at Clermont-Ferrand on Saturday morning,

but his official entry into the town did not take place until the following day, Sunday. The reception was a most brilliant one, the inhabitants of the town and the surrounding neighbourhood having turned out *en masse* to give him a hearty welcome. The enthusiasm was intense, and surprised a great many people acquainted with the taciturn, reserved temperament of the Auvergnats.

Learning that the local committee had some intention of erecting triumphal arches, the General very properly declined this doubtful honour.

"Triumphal arches," said he, "are only due to victorious generals or imperial Cæsars; I have not had the opportunity of becoming the former, and shall never be the latter."

To the Mayor of Clermont-Ferrand, who had made a speech of welcome, and saluted him as a Republican general, he replied,—

"Yes; I am a Frenchman and a Republican, deeply attached to the interests of the army and the grandeur of my country."

The President of the local Committee having made a speech in which he referred in complimentary terms to the services rendered by Boulanger during his stay at the War Office, the General took an opportunity of announcing that he was no longer a political personage, but a purely military man.

"When I was Minister of War," said he, "I occupied myself with politics, as was my duty. Here I am no longer a Minister, but a general, and can only do a soldier's work."

Having formally taken over the command of the 13th Army Corps, the General entered with the greatest spirit into all the details of his military work. He first superintended the autumn manœuvres of his corps, and then proceeded to inspect the different garrisons which composed it. At Lyons, St. Etienne, and Puy he received a hearty welcome, both from the troops and the inhabitants.

Naturally the press could not afford to ignore him, notwithstand-

ing his distance from Paris, and the reporters were frequently at Clermont-Ferrand to find out what he was doing, how he liked the place, whether he was satisfied, and to ask his opinion about things in general. His friends also went down to see him at frequent intervals, and the telegraph clerks at Clermont-Ferrand had never before had such a lively time of it as they had during the General's stay in the capital of Auvergne. Messages of immense length were passing to the newspapers every day, and there were occasionally others in code, mysterious missives, composed of groups of four figures, having a very diplomatic look to the initiated eye. The latter telegrams naturally excited the unhealthy curiosity of the Ministers, who carefully scrutinised everything sent or received by the General. We know one of his friends, who, having occasion to telegraph to him in code language, gave in his message at the Grand Hotel, Paris, signing it "*James.*" It just happened that immediately after doing this he had occasion to call on Maurice Rouvier, who was then Prime Minister and Minister of Finances. On entering M. Rouvier's office, the General's friend was not at all astonished to see this identical message lying on the table, showing that the telegraph authorities practised the "*cabinet noir*" business with commendable promptitude. This friend greatly surprised the unfortunate Rouvier by saying, in a bantering tone,—

"As you may have some trouble about translating this message, allow me to hand you my copy in plain language!"

This so astonished and annoyed the Prime Minister, that he could not find a word to say for quite a minute.

Our readers may possibly remember that about this time the Government did not hesitate to violate in the most flagrant manner its own rules for secrecy, by publishing in one of its organs a series of messages which passed between Count Dillon and the General during the latter's stay at Clermont. This did more harm to the

Government than to Boulanger; for it proved beyond doubt that they were ready to commit any mean trick, any crime, to compromise the man before whom they were all trembling.

Had the Count really wanted to baffle the curiosity of the Government, he could easily have done so, for he possesses a set of code books which would defy the combined efforts of all the professional *mouchards* or translators the Government could collect; a double-barrelled, duplex code, which is a marvel of ingenuity and simplicity, prepared and used long before Boulanger was a political power in the land.

A gentleman who once occupied a very high position at the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs one day assured us that the Government had a list on which was inscribed the names of those fortunate individuals whose movements and correspondence interested the Ministers; whenever any telegram arrived at the central office in Paris from or for any individual "on the list," a copy, if not the original, was always sent to the Ministry; if in code language, it was translated in the office specially maintained to decipher everything interesting to the Minister.

"All the time I was there," added this unblushing servant of the public, "not a message passed in which we were interested that was not translated; and we knew everything that was going on, not only amongst our enemies, but also between our friends, which was very often of much more importance to us."

Such is the system on which the Opportunists carry on what they dignify with the name of Government!

About the end of July the famous quarrel between the General and Jules Ferry broke out. In a speech which the latter delivered at Epinal, he had the impertinence to refer to the General as "a music-hall Saint-Arnaud." Boulanger, considering himself and the army gravely insulted by these words, instructed General Faverot de Kerbrech and Count Dillon to extract from Jules

Ferry an apology or full satisfaction. The two seconds went down to St. Dié, and requested M. Ferry to appoint two of his friends, with whom they could come to terms about the encounter. The Man of Tonkin referred them to two gentlemen called Proust and Raÿnal, who fully agreed that a meeting was inevitable.

But notwithstanding various meetings and discussions between the two pairs of seconds, these two worthy gentlemen, apparently anxious for their friend's skin, did not appear to be inclined to go much further. The General wanted a serious duel, in which he could avenge his personal honour and that of the army, which he considered to be attacked and insulted by this individual, who certainly ought to have known better. Jules Ferry appeared to want a meeting at which he could give the General the satisfaction he demanded without exposing himself to any danger.

There is no disguising the fact that Ferry was not burning with a desire to cross swords with his adversary. When the latter's seconds called on him at St. Dié, his attitude inspired them with a feeling of positive pity, which precluded for the time another feeling, that of disgust. When he heard the motive of their visit, he positively collapsed, morally and physically; the poor man was so surprised, that he lost all control over himself, wandered in his mind, and shook like a leaf. He had probably been so accustomed to being insulted and insulting other people in and out of Parliament, that he had got to look upon that sort of sport as the most natural thing in the world. When he found he had to deal with a man who was neither a Deputy nor a lawyer, but a soldier determined to defend his honour and that of the army, he really did not know what to make of it. The man who had sent thousands of soldiers to certain death in Tonkin with the lightest of hearts, lost his head at the thought of standing the fire or crossing swords with a man whom he had grossly insulted. As we have said, the seconds regarded him with a feeling of pity; but

should they ever be obliged to give their candid opinion about him, it is very evident they could not do otherwise than support the assertion of one of his colleagues in the Chamber, who stigmatized him as the king of cowards.

Let us draw a veil over this painful exhibition of moral turpitude and cowardice, and leave the unfortunate man to his reflections, the more so because his own supporters and the entire press did not spare him in the course of the discussion which took place at the time.

General Boulanger was on an official tour of inspection when the celebrated Limousin-Caffarel scandal broke out. Boulanger's name was pronounced in the course of the inquiry made into the affair, and several newspapers insinuated that the late Minister of War had a certain responsibility in these malpractices. The *Journal des Débats*, which has always been a persistent and implacable enemy to the General, was conspicuous amongst the hostile newspapers, and loudly blamed him for having appointed General Caffarel.

Several newspapers thereupon despatched reporters to Clermont-Ferrand to interview the General on the subject. In the course of a conversation the correspondent of a morning paper elicited from him the firm opinion that the inquiry just commenced about General Caffarel was openly aimed at him, the late Minister of War. He affirmed that General Ferron, exasperated by the attacks made on him, had boasted, in a private conversation, of his determination to entrap Boulanger in this prosecution, by fair or foul means, and thus destroy his popularity, which was so offensive to him and the Government.

"They want," said Boulanger, "to make me the scapegoat of the Caffarel affair; but I can calmly receive the attack, wherever it may come from, and await with equal confidence the verdict of public opinion.

"An inquiry has been opened, and it will establish that I have always held aloof from these dirty tricks, and there is no doubt I shall come out scathless from the abominable accusations made against me. On the other hand, the inquiry will probably prove fatal to many who are pushing it forward with such feverish ardour.

"I have seen plenty of swindling going on, but always in the higher circles; and never supposed a French General would mix himself up with the civilians, who fully sufficed, I thought, for this dirty work."

On being informed of the declarations thus made by Boulanger, General Ferron, the Minister of War, told his colleagues, then sitting in Cabinet council, that he had telegraphed to General Boulanger to return to Clermont-Ferrand, and inform him whether the language attributed to him was correct. Boulanger, on returning to Clermont, replied by a single word, "yes." But this reply was not sufficient for Ferron, who telegraphed to Boulanger again. The latter then sent another telegram, "Yes; I spoke as reported."

On receiving this last message, the Minister of War immediately sent a code telegram to Boulanger, instructing him to remain thirty days in close confinement. At the same time, he confirmed this by a sealed, registered letter, according to military regulations.

As may be imagined, the close confinement proved rather irksome to the General, so accustomed to an active, outdoor life. However, not being a man to encourage anything like "le spleen," he determined to make the best of it, and resolutely plunged into work. It was during this time that he put his notes in order, and prepared a part of his volume on the German invasion. He had, moreover, other work which was greatly in arrears, so that altogether he contrived to transform this punishment into a positive blessing. Of course, the inevitable comic journalists made the most of the incident, and invented some very amusing, ingenious

sketches, to show the public how the General passed his time away. One represented him as taking his morning ride round the room on a linen-horse, that being the only steed he could smuggle into the room. Another portrayed him gravely executing the manœuvres with two brigades of toy soldiers; whilst a third announced that he was busily engaged writing his memoirs. Naturally there were other people ready to say that he had not respected the terms of his punishment, that he was plotting with political people; and one influential journal, no other than the *Figaro*, announced that he was engaged with a young author in writing "The Patriotic History of General Boulanger," a work which was to be published in two hundred numbers. But the young author mentioned soon clipped the wings of this *canard*, in a letter which clearly proved that the General was a total stranger to the work, which was commenced before his departure from Paris. As a compensation, he frankly admitted that his publisher had got a biography written by the interested party himself, but that this work was signed "Jules Ferry."

The *Figaro* was not at first inclined to publish this rectification; but owing to a few well-applied, powerful arguments, the wily editor decided to insert the letter, to avoid any further complications.

We need not say that dozens of reporters, French and foreign, tried to see the General during his confinement; but all their efforts were in vain, he would receive none of them.

However, the thirty days came at last to an end, and the General resumed the command of his Army corps.

On the 15th of November the Government were excited by fresh fears, Boulanger was about to return to Paris! The enemy whom they had been stupid enough to create for themselves was now coming to face them, to the dire confusion of those who had assisted in bringing about what they called his disgrace.

In order to avoid a repetition of the manifestations which took place on the occasion of the General's departure for Clermont-Ferrand, the police authorities had taken very extensive measures, the Prefect even going so far as to take command of his men himself. The military authorities had also taken steps to prevent any disorder. General Saussier, the Governor of Paris, is said to have sternly announced that he would tolerate no manifestation likely to disturb public order of which any *militaire* might be the object, and that he would not hesitate to render the said *militaire* responsible for anything that might go wrong. This threat, intended by the Governor to be a very cruel cut at his former chief, turned out, after all, to be a sword-thrust in the water; so that Saussier had all his trouble for his pains.

The Gare de Lyon was crowded inside and out with troops, shivering with cold under the falling snow, sent there to guard the station against one solitary man, and that man one of their most distinguished chiefs. No one knowing exactly at what station the General would arrive, there were people waiting for him, and the inevitable policemen watching, at the Lyons, Orleans, and Eastern Railway stations, without mentioning those who had taken up a position in the neighbourhood of the Hôtel du Louvre to get a sight of the persecuted General, the victim of political spite and private hatred. The Prefect of Police had installed himself with his staff in the station-master's office at the Gare de Lyon, surrounded by telegraph and telephone instruments, enabling him to communicate with the Ministry of the Interior, the Elysée, and the Prefecture of Police. There they waited patiently for the advent of the redoubtable General.

While these vigilant guardians of public order, who would probably have dearly liked to see some disturbance, were thus turning night into day, and depriving their men of proper rest, Count Dillon was bowling along towards Charenton, with a pair of

good horses, to meet his friend at that station, and bring him back to Paris with him.

When the traveller descended, it may easily be imagined that he was quickly recognised by the station-master, who naturally lost no time in telegraphing the interesting news to his superiors, who immediately communicated it to the Prefect of Police. The latter heaved a sigh of intense relief, and immediately despatched a mounted messenger to the Elysée to announce the glad tidings to the President, who was probably waiting anxiously for news of this arrival.

The troops were sent back to barracks, the police to their respective beats, and the people who had been waiting for the General determined to seek their more or less virtuous couches, and content themselves with dreaming they had seen him.

The General had come to Paris to take part in the labours of the Commission for the classification of officers for promotion. It was during this visit that the celebrated "historical night" affair occurred. Our readers will probably remember that this was a meeting of politicians, amongst whom the General happened to find himself. They were all debating as to what ought to be done should Jules Ferry be elected by the Congress to succeed Grévy as President of the Republic. Some affirm that the General said, "*The soldiers will stay in barracks.*" This was in answer to a query as to what the army would do in case there should be any disorder in the streets. A great stir has been made at different times about the General's remark, which could never be construed into a plot against the Republic, for the very good reason that the meeting was composed of such well-known Republicans as Lockroy, Clémenceau, Laguerre, and others whose devotion to Marianne has never yet been disputed by any one.

Having finished his labours on the Commission, the General returned to his post at Clermont-Ferrand, where he remained in

comparative quiet until the end of February, when the public learnt that his name was being brought forward at various elections. On being informed of this, he immediately wrote to the Minister of War, telling him that he was a total stranger to everything that was going on.

The fact is, the affair had been arranged by a few of Boulanger's friends, unknown to him. They wanted to find out the real extent of his popularity, which had been denied by the Government. The results proved that they were right, that Boulanger's was a name to conjure with; for he obtained a good number of votes in seven departments, although it was well known he had formally disavowed those who were making use of his name.

These elections were, however, soon forgotten, and Boulanger was temporarily eclipsed by the illness of the Crown Prince of Prussia and the death of the German Emperor.

All at once however his name again came before the public. On the 15th of March, the Parisians, who were little expecting such a thing, read with stupefaction in the *Journal Officiel* a report addressed by the Minister of War to the President of the Republic, in which he accused General Boulanger of having been to Paris three times within a month without permission. After introducing the ridiculous element, by pretending that the General had disguised himself, wearing green spectacles and hobbling along as if lame, he wound up by proposing that he should be deprived of his command, and be placed on the retired list.

The President of the Republic naturally approved this measure, which was at once put into effect.

It is very probable that Boulanger was not greatly surprised or affected by this piece of unjust folly on the part of the Government; for when he received the news, he merely remarked to his secretary and orderly officers:

"Gentlemen, I am deprived of my command, and about to return to Paris. Now let's go to breakfast."

They did so, and we are informed that he was never in better humour than the morning on which he had received news which would have caused many men to collapse entirely.

This iniquitous measure caused an outburst of angry indignation from one end of France to the other, especially when it was discovered that it was based on a police report, and that though the General had twice applied for permission to come to Paris to see his wife, who was ill, the Minister had positively refused to allow him to do so. He then did what any other man would have done in his place, he took French leave, and came to see his sick wife. Strange to say, the very day the Minister made this report to the President, there were three other generals in Paris without leave. He knew this, but we heard of no complaint or report being made against them. The fact is, they had not just been made the medium of a national protestation against the incapacity of the men in power.

It is very evident that the Ministers themselves were conscious of the infamy of what they had just done; for in order to give a certain appearance of legality to this stupid act, they packed a court-martial, which was only too happy to convict the General at their bidding.

A mock trial was instituted, and after a parody of justice the General was condemned. Armed with this pseudo-legal sentence, the Government lost no time in pensioning him off, and thus rendered him eligible for the position the country was so soon destined to give him in the political world. The blind Ministers now fondly imagined that they had at length seen the last of their bugbear; but it will be seen that they were sadly mistaken in their calculations, and that their adversary was stronger than ever after their stupid persecutions.

The General proceeded to Clermont to settle his private affairs, and then returned to Paris, where he was soon surrounded by powerful friends, determined to assist him in the patriotic task he had undertaken, which was to rid the country of the gang of financiers and incapable men who were ruining it.

CHAPTER X.

BOULANGER LEAVES THE ARMY AND ENTERS PARLIAMENT.

SOME time before Boulanger was placed on the reserve list, the electors of various departments had already voted for him. Although fully aware that he was not eligible, the Hautes Alpes gave him 110 votes; the Côte d'Or, 9,487; the Loire, 13,918; the Loiret, 4,376; Marne et Loire, 11,391; Marne, 16,107; and the Haute Marne, 1,664. On the 25th of March the Bouches du Rhone gave him 12,083, and the Aisne, 45,089. We need not say that all these votes were given quite spontaneously, the General being ignorant of the matter until the results were communicated to him. On the 8th of April the Dordogne elected him by 59,397 votes, and the same day the Aisne gave him 8,499 votes.

Such were the first manifestations of popular sympathy bestowed on an ill-used man, but a few days later the people were destined to speak out in no uncertain voice in the election in the Nord, where, being free to do so, the General had announced his intention to stand. As soon as it was known that Boulanger had determined to enter political life, he was surrounded by powerful, talented, and influential friends. Count Dillon very naturally took charge of the financial arrangements; Laguerre, with his oratorical talent, was a valuable ally for parliamentary purposes; Rochefort, who has for the last thirty years wielded a pen which has

made him famous throughout the world as the most dangerous enemy a political *régime* could have—witness the Empire and the masterly manner in which he undermined it by his *Lanterne*—was a tower of strength in the literary and journalistic line; Naquet, an old parliamentary tactician, who by his pluck had carried the Divorce Bill through Parliament, was a valuable adviser on everything touching Parliamentary procedure and constitutional questions. Such are the principal men Boulanger grouped around him on his entry into political life; and we think that the astonishing results obtained warrant us in saying that he made a very happy choice. Of course other deputies and friends flocked around the General, and contributed towards the formation of a very strong and sufficiently numerous Committee, which met sometimes at Rochefort's house, sometimes at the offices of Mr. Lalou's newspaper, *La France.*

This committee was quite an open one. Whoever believed in Boulanger and the cause he was sustaining were cordially received; note was taken of the news they brought, and their views were listened to with the utmost attention. A great many people came together at this time, who were mutually astonished to meet one another at the house of such a man as Henri Rochefort, who has always held and propagated rather advanced ideas.

Naturally Boulanger at once fell a prey to the reporters, or *interwievers*, as they prefer to style themselves. From the time he entered political life they have given him no peace, but have followed him everywhere; gifted with a most extraordinary amount of assurance, they did not hesitate to take advantage of their acquaintance with some of Boulanger's friends to invite themselves to breakfast with the said friends, did they find Boulanger would be there. There they would, over a couple of cutlets and a bottle of wine, put the General through his facings, and catechise him in such a way that one might have taken them for Civil Service Com-

missioners examining a candidate for a good appointment. As a rule, he endured this very well, and soon got so accustomed to it, that he could discuss any question in any position; on foot, on horseback, in bed, in his carriage, and would certainly have been interviewed on the Eiffel Tower had the Fates allowed him to stay in Paris during the Exhibition.

Of course, one of the subjects which greatly exercised the minds of the *interwievers* was to find out "where the money came from." As there was no secret about the matter, the treasurer, Count Dillon, was quite ready to tell them that the local committees paid the greater part of the expenses, which were not very heavy, numbers of people canvassing, etc., for nothing. Even then money had commenced to pour in, and the registered letters out of which the Government has tried to make so much political capital had commenced to pour in.

The election in the Nord on the 15th of April being the first stand-up fight between the General and the Ministry, it was very natural that it should excite great interest throughout the country, the public being ever ready to applaud any man with sufficient pluck to stand up against the Government. They naturally wanted to know how the General behaved himself under fire, whether he was nervous, impatient, desponding, or what not. Of course the ubiquitous reporters were on his track, and undertook to count his pulse and take his measure on behalf of the public. They soon learnt to know the man, and discovered that, as a rule, he was not often in doubt about anything; he makes up his mind about a question, and settles it one way or the other. As regards this election, he was certain the Government was destined to receive a terrible blow, and was as cool and collected the day before the struggle as if his whole future had not been at stake.

On the eventful day, he rose at seven o'clock, went through his correspondence as usual with his secretary, and by eight o'clock

that was over. Formerly his youngest daughter, Mademoiselle Marcelle Boulanger, assisted him in this work; but after the General had been so martyrized the ladies partook of the general enthusiasm, and commenced writing to him in glowing strains. But some of these dainty, perfumed missives contained such burning declarations, such fulsome praise, and *invitations à la valse*, that it was thought expedient to transfer this work to a secretary. Not only that, some of the letters were just as abusive as the others were flattering; so that altogether it was thought best to allow Mademoiselle Boulanger to return to her favourite studies.

Having finished his correspondence, the General took a look at the newspapers, afterwards went for a ride in the Bois de Boulogne, returned to lunch, and then settled down to work. The work in question was correcting the proofs of "The German Invasion," which he had written with the aid of a *collaborateur*, as he had not time to put all his documents in order himself. In this work he has given an impartial account of the 1870 war. After spending a few hours at this book, he took his family out for a drive, returned to dinner, and at ten o'clock went to the restaurant Durand, opposite the Madeleine, to await the results of the election. There he was soon joined by Count Dillon, Rochefort, Laguerre, Laisant, and other friends, who all shared the General's certainty about the result of the struggle.

The first reports were very promising, and at ten o'clock a dozen telegrams arrived all together, each one announcing the best news. At one o'clock the General knew that he was elected with a total of 172,528 votes.

When we come to consider that he did not decide to stand till the last moment, that he did not go into the Department to canvass one of his electors, and that there was no time to do much more than print and distribute the voting papers, we must acknowledge this to be one of the most extraordinary elections

that ever took place in any country. It was a clear proof of the immense popularity enjoyed by the General, and of the great discontent reigning amongst all classes of the people against those in power.

The following Thursday Paris was thrown into a state of excitement by the announcement that General Boulanger intended to go to the Chamber of Deputies. This is the occasion on which he appeared in the famous landau, about which so much was said.

After breakfasting at the Hôtel St. James, in the Rue St. Honoré, with Count Dillon, Rochefort, Laguerre, and a few other friends, the day's proceedings were discussed, and they were all of opinion that, whether the General went on foot or in a closed carriage, nothing would prevent a manifestation. It was therefore decided that he should go to the Chamber officially, in the landau which he used to use formerly for his ministerial visits, and that they should start from the Louvre and return there after the sitting.

During this time the police authorities were making elaborate preparations, M. de Montjau, responsible for maintaining order within the walls of the Chamber, had also made his arrangements. There was an immense crowd all along the route from the Hôtel du Louvre to the Chamber of Deputies, especially on the Place de la Concorde, where the raised terraces, the statues, and even the mythological ladies in the fountains were crowded with ambitious Parisians, determined to see the famous General at any price.

There was certainly a crowd of twenty thousand people, and the windows along the Rue de Rivoli were full of Boulangists, the ladies being in the majority.

At three o'clock the General's carriage came out of the hotel; he was accompanied by deputies Laguerre and Le Herissé and M. Paul Déroulède. The carriage was obliged to stop several times, the crowd being so dense that the horses could not move. The

men cheered frantically, and threw their hats in the air in a very reckless way, unmindful of the damage it would do them, whilst the ladies waved their handkerchiefs, and threw bunches of roses into the General's carriage.

The crowd waited patiently outside for the new Deputy, who came out about half-past four, and drove off at once to the Hôtel du Louvre. As soon as the carriage started there was a formidable rush, which the police were quite powerless to stem; the carriage was surrounded and could not advance. Hundreds of hands were stretched out towards the General, who shook as many as he could, and the carriage was at last allowed to advance again, though very slowly. The individuals who cried *À bas Boulanger!* were, as usual, very roughly treated by the enthusiastic crowd. At last the General arrived at the Hôtel du Louvre; there he found waiting for him thirty partisans, bearing three magnificent bouquets, sent him by various groups of ladies. These bouquets were composed chiefly of red carnations, the General, foreseeing probably that he was destined to create a powerful party, having already chosen his favourite flower.

The crowd tried to invade the hotel, but the porters closed the doors just in time to prevent them from doing this. Outside, there was a terrible crush, what with the crowd, the private carriages, the omnibuses, the cabs, and the police. Naturally the people made a terrible din, with their cries of "*Vive Boulanger!*" and the singing of Boulangist songs. This lasted for more than an hour, and any intelligent foreigner might have supposed there was a riot going on in the Rue de Rivoli and on the Place du Palais Royal. One gentleman, who ventured to remark that he thought it was a scandalous demonstration, a huge advertisement, was promptly silenced by receiving a terrible blow, which positively flattened his nose, and he had quite enough to do to sponge this organ down, for the blood was running very freely. At five o'clock

the police came up in greater force than ever, and drove the crowd back, but not for long; for they soon returned, and yelled out for the General to appear on the balcony, but in vain.

A sort of Scotch mist, which set in about this time, did not suffice to send the Boulangists away; at six o'clock there was still a crowd opposite the balcony, hoping the General would make his appearance, and the streets were not finally cleared until about eight o'clock.

It is needless to add that the General was quite delighted with the reception he had met with from the population of Paris, who, by their attitude on this occasion, fully supported the electors of the Nord. This was a further proof that Boulanger, by his programme, was then in touch with the nation, as represented by the capital, on the one hand, and the largest and most important department on the other. This augured well for the future triumphs he was destined to achieve, and encouraged him to persist in the programme he had marked out for himself.

When French and especially Parisian people have once commenced to indulge in political manifestations without let or hindrance, the authorities find it a hard matter to stop them. The fact is, the typical Parisian *badaud* is fond of seeing something going on in the street, and never more delighted than when he has a good occasion for roaring, *Vive!* some one or something.

The inhabitants of the right bank of the Seine having had their *fête* on the occasion of Boulanger's visit to the Chamber, the students of the Latin Quarter considered they had a perfect right to a little harmless amusement in that classic home of Bohemianism and bocks.

Their sympathies being chiefly with the existing order of things, they naturally adopted the cry of "*À bas Boulanger!*" Meetings were held by these budding lawyers, poets, doctors, and artists; "resolutions" were passed, in which these seventeen-year old

politicians "protested in the most energetic way against the proceedings of the future dictator, and expressed their sincerely Republican sentiments, their love of liberty, and their hatred of tyranny."

This political thunderbolt, destined to stem the tide of Boulangism and make the General tremble in his boots, was taken by a certain number of "delegates" and handed to M. Anatole de la Forge, one of the members for Paris, who, contriving with wonderful self-control to avoid laughing in the beardless politicians' faces, took the precious document, and promised to deliver it to M. Floquet, the Prime Minister.

Having performed this patriotic task, and, like the geese of the Capitol, saved the Republic dear to Ferry & Co., the worthy delegates marched off, swelling with pride, to give an account of their mission to their comrades, who were anxiously waiting for them at their favourite *café*, "*La Source*," Boulevard St. Michel. Having ordered a sufficient number of bocks, produced their longest pipes, adjusted their velvet bonnets, and taken care that the Mimi Pinsons of the establishment were well within hearing, they proceeded to give an account of their doings. They were frequently interrupted by the applause of their comrades, and concluded by announcing that they intended to organize a monster meeting of protestation, to which all patriotic Republicans would be invited.

The following evening there was something like a riot on the Boulevard St. Michel between the boy-politicians and the Boulangists, who, though not very numerous, were pretty determined not to be outdone. The students, the collegians, and the floating population of the quarter had made up their minds to have a little fun; so forming themselves into a sort of regiment, each one armed with a bludgeon, they marched up and down the boulevard, shouting, brandishing their weapons, and vowing death to the

Boulangists. The latter, equally eager for the fray, advanced, but the police, with an impartiality which was very praiseworthy, hustled Boulangists and anti-Boulangists alike, so that both sides had to retire without having an opportunity of measuring the thickness of one another's skulls. The Boulangists, foreseeing that there would certainly be a collision, determined to obtain reinforcements, and returned to the other side of the water, to the Montmartre Quarter, where they were sure to find friends and supporters. They then returned to the Palais Royal, fully expecting and hoping that the children of the Latin Quarter would come to meet them; but to their surprise and disappointment, they met none of them when they arrived on the Place du Palais Royal. There was a very good reason for this; the police had prevented the students passing the bridges; so that the Boulangists were obliged to disperse, and get into the Latin Quarter in small groups. About eleven o'clock there was a crowd of ten thousand people on the Boulevard St. Michel, and the two factions, Boulangists and Opportunists, were at length able to indulge in the luxury of a free fight, the police being utterly powerless to prevent this collision, which was bound to take place sooner or later. Naturally there were a great many women in the crowd, and they not being in any way impassioned, cried out indifferently "*Vive Boulanger!*" or "*À bas le Dictateur!*" During this time another manifestation was going on near the Central Markets; crowds patrolled the streets to the cries of "*Vive Boulanger!*" "*À bas Boulanger!*" and the police had the greatest difficulty in preventing a serious collision between the two rival factions.

Of course, Boulanger was a total stranger to these manifestations, which had really nothing particularly political about them, nine out of ten of the manifestors not being of an age to be trusted with a voting paper. The students and the collegians were naturally delighted with an opportunity for annoying the police and making

a disturbance; whilst the Boulangists themselves were principally young fellows who were only too pleased to have a chance of going for the students, who adopt an attitude which would lead any one to suppose that the Latin Quarter is their private property, and that the *bourgeois* is only to be allowed there on sufferance. When it is considered that most of these youngsters hail from Landerneau, Carpentras, and other remote provincial spots, when they do not belong to Paraguay, Mexico, the Sandwich Islands, and Timbuctoo, the absurdity of their pretensions will be patent to all. The fact is, they have a hazy idea that the students as a body have at certain epochs played a part in politics, and are anxious to emulate their predecessors.

The next day M. Floquet received the delegates, and after promising that he would restore order in their Quarter, asked them to abstain from all manifestations in the streets, and thus help him in his task. The delegates promised to do so, and retired, delighted with the serious way in which the Prime Minister had treated their "protestations."

Notwithstanding the promise made to M. Floquet, there were fresh disorders in the Quarter, showing that the students had forgotten their word with a facility which hardly became such honest and sincere patriots. A day or two after this, they held their famous meeting, elected a president, a secretary, etc., etc., and carried on their business with as much solemnity as if it had been a diplomatic conference, composed of the Prime Ministers of all European nations. Their style of voting was not, however, very parliamentary, for instead of holding up their hands, they held up their bludgeons. This forest of bludgeons, of all sizes, colours, and shapes, presented a really terrific appearance, and we mentally compared them with a Land League meeting in Ireland, where the boys could doubtless make as good a show of timber, and certainly a better fight should the occasion arise. After several

speeches, they voted seven resolutions, the burden of all of them being that they would continue to organize the defence of the Republic!

They held another meeting, but as that, like the first one, was completely forgotten by everybody, including the students themselves, a few days afterwards, it is useless to say anything about it.

The students had had a week's good fun; some had had the pleasure of seeing their names in the paper; they had proclaimed to the world their absolute devotion to the Republic, and organized the defence of that blessed institution, that "great boon," as Artemus would have called it. Who can say that the students of Paris had lost their week? Some irascible critics were cruel enough to ask who was continuing their studies whilst they were "manifesting"; but any one can see that this question was put by some crusty, old-fashioned father, who was simple enough to think the students were there to study, forgetting the important fact that there was a Republic in danger, and that youngsters of eighteen were naturally designed by Nature to save it. Notwithstanding the ukase of the students, Boulanger continued to live on, and even flourish, a piece of impertinence he will certainly have to atone for the day the "delegates" form their Cabinet.

Having been invited to dinner by some of his friends, the General thought he would like to offer them one in return, and the famous dinner at the Café Riche was the outcome of this hospitable idea. As the news soon spread abroad, there was a large crowd outside the restaurant, and Boulanger was naturally greeted with an ovation as he drove up. Amongst the guests were Count Dillon, MM. Naquet, Turquet, Aurelien Scholl, the brilliant *chroniqueur*, Rochefort, and Déroulède.

M. Naquet having proposed the General's health, the latter responded in a speech which was a sort of declaration or programme. In the course of this address he repeated the famous

phrase which he had used when some one reproached him with too warlike tendencies. "If I wished for war, I should be a madman; but if I did not make every preparation for it I should be a scoundrel."

This speech was an appeal to the best feelings of his countrymen, an announcement of his determination to execute a work of conciliation, of forming a party which should be a rallying point for honest men of all political creeds; the only thing they intended to insist on being, that whoever joined them must accept the Republican ticket, the only one on which they could constitute a really National party, recruited indistinctly amongst all the present parties.

He added that before elaborating a complicated programme, which it would be impossible to carry out, it was necessary to insist on the three principal points, Dissolution, Revision, and a *Constituante.* These three words clearly expressed his entire programme.

After warning them to take no notice of his calumniators, who would not fail to represent him as a future dictator, he concluded, as a proof of the contrary, by saying that should any one during the *Constituante* propose the abolition of the Presidency of the Republic, he would be the first to vote in favour of the measure.

This was one of the first political speeches made by Boulanger, and every one remarked on its soldierly frankness. His style is clear, terse, and energetic; he always goes straight to the point and his speeches generally contain one or two telling phrases worthy of being remembered and quoted. He is not, of course, an orator, a thing on which he is to be congratulated; every country produces a plethora of those individuals who can hold forth for hours on any subject without once burdening their long-suffering audiences with a rational idea or a new thought. If talk sufficed to govern a country, France, with her scores of brilliant orators

would be the best governed nation in the world. But, alas! something more than this is required; for, notwithstanding the possession of these oratorical treasures, she is now on the verge of political ruin.

On going out, the General and his guests found an immense crowd waiting for them round the restaurant. There was a slight disturbance, and in the fray several arrests were made, MM. Déroulède, Le Herissé, and Susini being included in the number. They were, however, released an hour or two later.

M. le Herissé asked a question about this in the Chamber the next day, and the world then learnt with surprise that *Vive Boulanger!* was a seditious cry. Strange to say, this astonishing definition was given by the very man who had brought himself into notoriety by the famous and ludicrous cry: *Vive la Pologne, Monsieur!*

About this time the National Committee installed its offices in a house in the Rue de Sèze, close to the Madeleine. It was in this house that Marchandon had strangled Madame Cornet, and witty Opportunists did not fail to point out the significance of this fact, which led them to the conclusion that Boulanger would strangle the Republic with as much unconcern as Marchandon had *ecoffié* the poor, defenceless woman.

This office was in reality a flat furnished for a family, and our room boasted of a handsome bed, which naturally gave rise to a number of easy jokes from our spiritual visitors. The crowd of callers was often so great that they could not all get into the rooms, and were obliged to remain on the stairs. The *concierge*, the autocrat of the house, would not allow them to stay there; so that they were in a cruel predicament: they could not get in, and were not allowed to remain out. The fact is, the people on the upper floors really had cause for complaint. We ourselves have seen twenty visitors positively camping out on the stairs, waiting

their turn, laughing, talking, smoking, playing cards, very much as they do at the opera doors when admission is free.

To this office came politicians of all parties, newspaper editors, reporters, candidates for appointments, and a goodly collection of Government spies, who would instal themselves in the ante-room for the purpose of noting the names of any prominent men who came to the Committee. This place however seemed to bring ill-luck; the Ardêche results were received here, so were those from the Charente, when Paul Déroulède stood for that department, backed up by the General, who had told the electors that voting for Déroulède was exactly like voting for him. But the electors were not of that opinion; for Paul Déroulède came back from the Charente with the announcement that he had not succeeded, despite all his efforts. The offices were soon after transferred to Neuilly, where there was more room, and the house was better adapted to the requirements of the Committee. The distance, it was hoped, would prevent a great many amiable idlers from dropping in and "grilling" a cigarette; men, who strolling along the boulevard with nothing particular to do, suddenly thought to themselves, "Suppose we drop in and give the Boulangists a look." This removal had the desired effect; for your indolent boulevard *flaneur* thought twice before investing three francs fifty in a cab to go to Neuilly, on the outskirts of the city.

At the end of May the General left the Hôtel du Louvre and definitely settled down in a pretty little house in the Rue Dumont d'Urville, near the Arc de Triomphe. This house had belonged to an artist, and the studio was chosen by the General as his office.

Here the impudent little Joseph reigned supreme. He it was who undertook to tell the visitors to wipe their feet, advised them as to their chances of seeing the General, and told them little stories to while the time away in an agreeable manner. We once called, and found Joseph relating an anecdote to M. Arnaud de l'Ariège,

a Parisian millionaire notability, and M. Robert Mitchell, the well-known Buonapartist leader. Just as we arrived the General's bell rang; Joseph ran off to answer it, and came back to finish his anecdote, with his hands in his pockets, the very picture of consummate coolness and impudence. Journalists who went to interview Joseph found themselves being interviewed instead; when he did deign to submit to the operation he always used the majestic "we."

"Yes; we are quite satisfied with the way things are going on. The Conservatives are behaving themselves very well, the Buonapartists are very useful people, and general feeling in the provinces is decidedly favourable."

The correspondent of a big London daily told us that, with the view of facilitating matters, he once slipped a ten-franc piece into Buttons' hand. But Buttons gave him a very severe lesson as to the folly of trying to bribe public functionaries, for he made him wait four hours for his turn. From that day forth he ceased to tip Joseph, who ever afterwards eyed him in a very knowing, comical way.

Joseph positively took himself for a member of the Committee at least, and received the people with a comical air of authority which disarmed even those who were sometimes inclined to pull his ears. He has now been allowed to retire and taste the sweets of private life, and may probably turn up later on as a candidate in his *arrondissement*. In that case, he would naturally take up a position hostile to Boulanger, and probably rob him of his popularity.

Apart from these weaknesses, we must say the little fellow managed the reception business with wonderful skill, contriving with real tact to satisfy the hundreds of people of all sorts and conditions who went to see the General daily.

Joseph took their measure at once, and knew if it was best to

send them away, leave them on the stairs, introduce them into the waiting-room, or show them up into the drawing-room. Should he ever write his memoirs, he would have an interesting tale to tell of the various and curious scenes that took place in this small "hôtel," the different people who came to see the General for various motives, the mysterious ladies with long veils, the dainty bouquets accompanied by perfumed notes, the many curious people who wanted to see the General, and who went away disappointed after all.

On the floor above were the General's secretaries, men who worked hard from eight in the morning, military time, till seven in the evening, and frequently midnight, when there was anything special going on; and with this terrible man there was always something special going on; a speech in the House, a duel, a voyage, or a banquet; all things which increased the labours of the secretaries, who could never be accused of enjoying a luxurious sinecure.

To give an idea of the extent of his correspondence, we may mention that the General spent on an average a hundred pounds a week for postage; no one would wonder at this could they have seen the mountain of cards with *Remerciements sincères* that went away from the house every day. Add to that the hundreds of letters, for all countries under the sun, the photographs, etc., etc., and the above figures will not appear excessive. It is calculated that every elector in France has received the General's card in reply to some communication or other; hundreds of thousands have received letters, and thousands his photograph.

Londoners having had every opportunity of seeing the General at work, or reading descriptions of his receptions, we need not refer here to the affability with which he receives all visitors, the patience with which he listens to what they have to say, and the prompt reply he gives them when they have finished.

After a good experience of public men and their ways, we must say we never saw a man who contrived to send his visitors away better pleased with themselves and him than the General. This is not because he kept them long or allowed them to ramble in their statements; as soon as he observed they were likely to do this, he at once assured them that the question was a very interesting one, and begged them to send him a report on the point. Taking them by the hand and leading them imperceptibly towards the door, he would say in a smiling, affable way,—

"Just send me a written report on the matter; I'll look through it the first opportunity I have, and let you have a reply. *Au revoir et merci.*"

The General then shook hands with his visitor, who went off delighted, and made way for the next on the list. This inventor or reformer then went home, wrote out his report, and took it to the General's house himself, having but a very limited confidence in the post office. But the most wonderful of all is, he got from the General a reply which proved that his report had been duly read and considered. Hundreds of schemes have been submitted to the General, and amongst the number some have been found good and carried into effect, not by Boulanger himself, but by friends to whom he had recommended deserving men. Both he and the National Committee have always steadfastly refused to entertain any schemes of a commercial or financial nature.

CHAPTER XI.

BOULANGER IN THE PROVINCES.

DURING the summer of 1888, the General visited four departments—the Nord, Brittany, Charente Inférieure, and the department of the Somme. In December, he attended an important banquet at Nevers; and in March, 1889, he paid a visit to Tours, the chief town of the department of Indre et Loire.

Though the inhabitants of these different regions differ very much in sentiment, politics, and ideas, the reception he met with was everywhere very favourable.

The mechanics of Lille, the miners of Anzin and Denain, the fishermen of Dunkirk, the Government workmen of Rochefort, the well-to-do citizens of Nevers and Tours, and the sturdy peasants in all departments were equally cordial and enthusiastic.

The first journey to the north was undertaken in order to thank the electors for the immense and flattering majority they had given him the previous month. The General was followed by an immense number of journalists, the best special talent from every Paris paper of any importance, favourable or unfavourable, and by special reporters from all the local newspapers in the Nord and neighbouring departments. We must say they got on very well together, notwithstanding the difference of their opinions, and it would be difficult to find better-humoured, wittier, or more entertaining companions than they proved to be. Nothing

could be more interesting than to see the way each one did his work. Chincholle, of the *Figaro*, with his eyes and ears always open, took notes at every moment, wrote his copy as he went along, and polished up his phrases as carefully as Tennyson would polish up a sonnet. Boisglavy, representing the *Gaulois*, kept his eyes and ears equally open, occasionally took a note in a very small note-book, and never wrote a word of his article until he got to the telegraph office. Lauze, the correspondent of the *Presse*, considered by some to be the Boulangist organ, smoked all the time, talked of everything under the sun except his work, never took a note, never wrote a line in the train, but on arriving at the telegraph office would dash off a column and a half of descriptive matter, which clearly proved he had seen all that had been going on. As to the provincial pressmen, they naturally "took a back seat" in presence of their dashing Parisian *confrères*, of whom they seemed just a little afraid.

There were times, however, when the correspondents' task was an extremely difficult one, especially for those representing opposition or purely independent journals. We have seen these men driven to the verge of despair by the telegrams they received from their editors.

"You are too partial. Boulanger must have bought you over. There cannot possibly be the enthusiasm you describe."

"What can I do?" said a distracted correspondent of an independent Paris newspaper to us one day. "I can only report what I see and hear; it isn't my fault if the whole country has gone mad over Boulanger!"

Even the reporters who "came to scoff" and write the General down were obliged, much against their will, to do just the contrary, by sheer force of circumstances which they could not alter, and which it would have been foolish to deny. Strange to say, several reporters who were with us in the Nord, quite favourable

to the General, followed us through the other departments as opposition men, their paper having changed colour in the interval, frequently owing to the magic influence of "secret service money." One editor we know of was warned by the Prime Minister that he had to choose between prison and a change of politics. The Prime Minister, being in a position to carry out his threat, and the victim knowing how matters stood, the latter was obliged to become a turn-coat, so that the following morning the Parisians were astonished to find that the most ardent of Boulangists had suddenly become the General's most violent enemy.

Indeed, a very interesting chapter of journalistic history might be written under the heading, "Why I became anti-Boulangist." We should learn that one gentleman had changed his politics because his mother, a talented actress, was envious of the distinction enjoyed by Madame Dieulafoy and some other ladies in the possession of the Cross of the Legion of Honour. Just as she was despairing of ever obtaining it by her dramatic talent or charitable efforts, she learnt through a mysterious and more or less official channel, that should her son take it into his head to adopt a hostile attitude towards Boulanger, that might probably assist her in obtaining the coveted decoration. With a filial affection which we cannot find heart to blame, the son gave his conscience a twist, the mother got her Cross, and the General another literary opponent.

Another brilliant *littérateur*, who had always been Boulangist from sheer sympathy, he being a personal friend of the General, was forced into the Government camp by a curious *ruse*. Being the president of a club where rather high play went on, from which he drew a handsome income, he was naturally anxious to retain such a profitable position. But a discreet hint conveyed to him by the Prefect of Police that the Government had instructed him to close the club made the spiritual *chroniqueur* reflect, and the result of his reflections was he determined to keep his club open, and

become anti-Boulangist. He therefore trimmed his sails accordingly, and Boulanger saw no more of him.

Others, were they in a confiding mood, would tell you they had firmly believed in Boulanger for a long time, but that they could not continue to pin their faith to a man who did not reciprocate it, and who appeared to place no pecuniary value on their support. This being so, their consciences impelled them to believe in the Government, and they therefore haunted the Prime Minister's lobby as assiduously as they had formerly hung about the General's house.

Naturally the General has always been able to regard with an indifferent, indulgent eye these defections, prompted by purely personal motives; the natural and human desire to sell their literary wares at the best market. Their support could not have done him much good, whilst their opposition does him no harm, the majority of the public being well aware of their private reasons for what they call their patriotic efforts.

As the *modus operandi* was practically the same on each occasion, it would be idle to give a detailed account of our visits to each department, we will therefore describe a typical journey, and explain how things were managed, after which we can point out the most noteworthy incidents of the subsequent tours. The visit to the Nord being the first and the most interesting, we will describe that.

The General left Paris at eight o'clock on the 11th of May for Dunkirk, in a special saloon carriage, kindly placed at his disposal by the railway authorities, all of whom, it may be said, treated him, on every occasion, with the utmost attention; we must, however, admit that Sir Myles Fenton and the South-Eastern Railway beat the record on the occasion of Boulanger's journey from Brussels to London. The General was accompanied by Count Dillon, who also went with him on nearly all the subsequent

journeys, Laguerre, and several other intimate political friends; whilst the remaining places in the saloon carriage were occupied by the principal journalists and the General's and Count Dillon's private secretaries.

The Government had, with touching attention, sent 200 policemen to keep a crowd of 100 people in order. All the railway *employés*, knowing the General was going, crowded around the carriage at every available point, to get a sight of him. The driver of a train going in the same direction as ourselves managed to keep his engine just opposite the saloon carriage, so that he enjoyed a famous view of the General for some time. At every station between Paris and Dunkirk we found crowds, more or less large, according to the size of the town, and there was great enthusiasm and frequently some amusing cries, such as, *Vive l'Empereur! Vive notre brave Général!*

In order, no doubt, to break the monotony of the journey, the Government had sent two gentlemen by our train to get out and whistle at each station. As the reader is no doubt aware, French people express their disapprobation by whistling, either with a key or a whistle bought for the purpose. All through our journeys this instrument will play a part, not a very important one, it is true, but really very useful, as it always served to mark the great disproportion between the whistlers and those who cheered.

On arriving at Dunkirk, there was such an enormous concourse of people and such a crush that the railway authorities really could not collect the tickets, and this was of daily occurrence at the various towns we visited. A deputation from the local Boulangist committee came to present a bouquet, make a speech of welcome, and conduct the General and his friends to the carriages prepared for them, and after a terrible crush, they contrived to get through the crowd.

The *cortége* proceeded slowly on its way, guarded by gendarmes on either side, beaming with delight at being so near the General, apparently quite proud of their mission. After a twenty minutes' ride, we arrived at the hotel, where a lunch was prepared for the visitors. Immediately afterwards, the General and a select party of friends visited the docks in course of construction, and the workmen suspended their labours to cheer the visitors. From there they drove to the suburb of Rosendael, where the entire population had voted for him. All Dunkirk was *en fête*, the bands were playing "*En revenant de la Revue*," "*Les Pious-pious d'Auvergne*," and other soul-inspiring tunes, flags were flying from every house in the town and from every ship in the docks, the whole population was out of doors; the General's most ardent opponents were obliged to admit that the reception was as spontaneous and sincere as it was unanimous.

Between six and seven o'clock, the General held an open reception, receiving, amongst others, a deputation of fishwomen, bravely dressed in their Sunday best and bringing a really handsome bouquet. The spokeswoman of the party made a pretty speech, the General made an equally amiable reply, and heartily embraced the dear old girl, who went away with her friends looking as happy as a queen. There we saw with what tact the soldier-deputy found a nice kind word for old and young, men and women, so that one and all went away delighted.

All over the town nothing else was talked about, and the red carnation was displayed in every button-hole and in every dress.

About this time the General received a letter from Esquelbecq, a small town between Dunkirk and Douai, requesting him to look out of the window as he passed their station.

At eight o'clock a dinner of forty covers was given to the principal members of the local Boulangist committees, presided over by the General, supported by his Parisian friends, the latter seated

in such a way as to have a local celebrity and a Parisian friend together. The General looked very imposing in his dress suit, with his tricoloured, deputy's sash, and the insignia of one of his decorations, the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour. He ate very heartily, and was very merry during the dinner, at which the greatest cordiality reigned throughout. After a few informal toasts and speeches, the party broke up, and the visitors retired to their rooms, not to sleep, but to arrange for the next day's proceedings.

Early the next morning we left for Douai, the engine-driver of the train actually leaving his post to come and shake hands with the General. The latter did not forget to look out of the window at Esquelbecq, and had the pleasure of seeing his partisans waiting for him; in fact, all along the route we saw the same crowds, heard the same cheering, and met with an equally hearty welcome.

At last we arrived at Douai, where, although there was an immense crowd, we did not hear a single whistle or a hostile cry. The local Committee was naturally well to the front, with bouquet speech, and smiling welcome; the General kissed the two little boys who presented him with the bouquet, listened attentively to the neat little speech made by the local President, shook hands with all of them, and stepped into the carriage and drove slowly through the crowd. The popular joy knew no bounds as the *cortége* passed slowly on its way to the hotel, cheered by the dense throng of enthusiastic partisans, and the General could well afford to smile at a few opponents, who had taken the prudent precaution to get inside their houses, out of the way of the enthusiastic and muscular Boulangists.

Very serious military precautions had been taken; no one knew why, for this was a purely popular *fête*, a day of rejoicing, and not a riot. All the soldiers were kept in barracks except those guarding the route along which the General was to pass.

The General invited his local friends to lunch with him, after which there was an informal speech or two, and he received a few Committees from the neighbouring towns. He then proceeded to the Hôtel de Flandre, where the miners of the district were waiting for him. There he received a reception grand enough to turn any man's head: the men embraced him, shook hands with him, insisted on chinking glasses with him, and, in fact, nearly stifled him. Never had any of us seen such an outburst about a political man; those who had known and followed Thiers, Macmahon, and Gambetta were unanimous in saying that none of them had excited anything like the same delirious enthusiasm. The people were literally mad with joy, and when the time came to leave for Lille, they took the General up in their arms and carried him in triumph to his carriage.

During this time the authorities had massed a regular army round about the railway station, the approaches to which were blocked by cavalry, infantry, and police. Only the General's carriage was allowed to pass this military cordon, and even the members of his suite, who all had tickets, had the greatest trouble in getting into the station. Notwithstanding these vexatious, unnecessary, and costly precautions, a great many people contrived somehow to get on to the platform, and the train steamed out of the station to the usual cry of "*Vive Boulanger!*"

About five o'clock the same day the General made his entrance into Lille, and never shall we forget the sight that met our gaze on emerging from the railway station, which resembled as much as anything the Gare de Lyon the day of the General's departure from Paris. The only difference was that at Lille there was a greater tumult, the opposition party being very strong, and having massed 500 people with whistles to greet the General as he made his way to the hotel, situated close to the station.

To reply to these whistlers there was an immense crowd shouting,

cheering, and manifesting in every way in favour of the General. The din was terrible, hats flew in the air, and a series of free fights ensued between the irascible Opportunists and the excited Boulangists. The latter, though twenty times more numerous than their adversaries, could not by all their cheering drown the discordant, strident notes of their whistles, which were kept going, we must say, with wonderful pertinacity. The General at last succeeded in making his way to the hotel, through the immense crowd that was besieging the door; once inside, he went straight up to his rooms and made his appearance on the balcony, accompanied by his friends. Then arose a loud, deep, and hearty cheer from his partisans, to which the 500 whistles quickly responded by the most horribly discordant noise it would be possible to imagine, whilst all around the hotel one could have let a coin drop, it would not have fallen on the ground, so thick was the human mass in all directions. As long as Boulanger remained on the balcony, the cheering and whistling continued with unabated vigour, twenty thousand excited people surged and crushed round the hotel, yelling, hooting, cheering, whistling, fighting, flourishing their sticks with disquieting vigour all around them. Naturally there was the usual contingent of children, young girls, mothers with babes in their arms, and old women who could hardly set one foot before another! How these helpless creatures escaped being trodden to death in this crowd was a mystery to all of us. To put the finishing touches to this moving, curious scene, the hostile occupants of the numerous windows opposite the hotel showered down thousands of small caricatures printed on white paper, in which the General was represented in a shocking attitude; and the effect of these papers fluttering in the air was exactly like a fall of snow in summer.

About six o'clock the Mayor of Lille came to see for himself the importance of the manifestations. There were still some twenty

thousand people in the street opposite the hotel, and the mayor, an ardent Opportunist, was so insulted and hooted that he began to feel somewhat alarmed, and hastened to rejoin the military, whom he at once ordered to clear the streets. Three brigades of gendarmes, fine, handsome men, splendidly mounted, drove the crowd back, and paraded in faultless order up and down in front of the hotel, with their eyes fully directed to the balcony on which the General was standing. Behind them came three brigades of gendarmes on foot, all of them irresistibly attracted by the occupant of the balcony.

Inside the hotel the scene was equally animated, every one was anxious to see the General, and the house was crowded from floor to ceiling by people who had managed to get in, no one knew how, for the front door had been kept closed all the time. Numbers of ladies had come with their children, so that Boulanger was obliged to hold a sort of informal reception again, and to shake hands with the hundreds who had come to congratulate him. Altogether it was a stirring, exciting scene, calculated to touch the hardest hearts, the most indifferent natures, this wild enthusiasm for one man, an entire population stretching forth its arms towards the man they fully believed to be their political saviour. For the moral of this was, without doubt, that "*C'est Boulanger qu'il leur faut*,"—"Boulanger is the man they want." This is the cry raised by all, especially the peasantry, who are slow to make up their minds, but who, once they make them up, are just as slow in changing.

A popular banquet of 800 covers had been organized at the Alcazar, and at nine o'clock the General, who had, like every one else, immense trouble to get through the crowd singing Boulangist songs, arrived at the doors. Inside and outside there were now none but sympathetic partisans, and at his entry the band struck up "*En revenant de la Revue*," which was the signal for long,

hearty, and enthusiastic cheering. The *table d'honneur* was on the stage, whilst the others were arranged in the body of the hall in such a way that each guest could get a view of the General and his supporters at the principal table.

The General, in evening dress, wearing, as usual, his deputy's sash and decoration, showed to great advantage, and appeared thoroughly satisfied with his reception, notwithstanding the 500 whistlers. The dinner commenced, and those who were to speak were nervously fumbling in their pockets for the precious paper on which they had written their speech, or the "points" of their oratorical effort. Suddenly the band commenced, "*En revenant de la Revue.*" All the guests rose as one man and stood on their seats. By a happy inspiration they all waved their *serviettes* in the air, and continued to do so whilst the tune was being played, thus presenting a very picturesque effect, and reproducing in favour of Boulanger that wealth of white which had been displayed against him during the day in front of the hotel.

The speeches then commenced, and at last the General's turn came, for, as is his wont, he spoke after all the others had finished. He reads his speeches in a loud, firm, clear voice, emphasizing the most effective points, and infusing a grave, impressive tone into those parts in which he speaks of France, her future, or her honour. He generally prepares his speeches very carefully, writes them out himself, and refuses to show them to any one before they have been delivered. The Lille speech was prepared in this way, and the General's own manuscript was handed over to the telegraphists, who transmitted it to Paris.

On leaving Lille, the party went to Valenciennes, where they met with the same enthusiastic reception. After lunch, we went to Anzin, the great mining centre, followed by thousands of electors from Valenciennes and the surrounding district. There the General was received by the mayor himself, in the town hall and a long

procession of visitors streamed in, eager to shake hands with him. The mothers held up their children for him to kiss, the young girls went to shake hands with him (in the hope of getting a kiss also), and the men gave him such hearty wrenches that they nearly shook his arm off.

His admirers made him some curious presents: one lady gave him two little white pigeons, tied together with silk tri-coloured ribbons, a very embarrassing *cadeau* for one who had a thousand miles to travel before reaching home.

At last the General had to tear himself away, as they were waiting for him at Denain, ten miles off. All along the route the crowd followed him, jumping up behind and on the carriage steps, determined not to leave him. On going through each village we met with the same enthusiasm, and heard the same ovations, whilst there was not a discordant note anywhere. After having absorbed an immense quantity of dust mixed with small coal, we arrived at Denain looking quite as black as the inhabitants themselves, a subtle piece of flattery which certainly ought to have pleased them. There we had another edition of the Anzin manifestation. The room where the reception was held was rather small, and the crowd was so great that Count Dillon and several of those who were with the General could not possibly get inside.

On leaving for Valenciennes, the General was asked to go the longest way round. This request emanated from the mothers of families, who, obliged to stay at home, were yet anxious to see the popular idol.

In the evening, banquet reception, and at last bed, for some of us, at least. We must suppose that some were in no hurry, for at half-past one we saw several deputies and journalists discussing a bottle of wine and talking over the events of the day, just as if it had been absinth time, and they were seated round a marble table at the *Café de la Paix*.

The next day the General and his friends left Valenciennes at a very early hour for Fourmies, where the masters had given all their men a holiday to enable them to meet their Deputy. Here there was a banquet of 200 covers; a musical feast, the guests with their knives and forks keeping time with the band whenever it played a Boulangist tune.

It is useless to speak of the applause which greeted the General's speech, the presentations, or of the inevitable whistlers, who "got themselves disliked and ill-treated" by an enthusiastic crowd, who would brook no opposition during what they looked upon as a popular holiday. Such, in fact, was the character of Boulanger's progress through the whole department: each town made it the occasion for a holiday, a day of rejoicing, and the banquets were quite family affairs, at which the utmost good-humour and cordiality reigned. As a proof of this, we may say that throughout the six tours they never had occasion to turn a man out for riotous behaviour.

On leaving Fourmies, followed by the cheers and good wishes of the entire population, we went to Avesnes, where the General was received by a deputation of fourteen of the prettiest young ladies in the town, all dressed in white and wearing silk sashes of the national colours. The eldest, a remarkably handsome brunette of about nineteen, the daughter of one of the notabilities of the town, read a pretty speech of welcome, and the General, who would have liked to treat them all alike, was obliged to content himself with embracing the blushing *oratoress*. Outside there was an immense crowd, and we had the usual trouble in getting to our carriages.

Preceded by a band playing the sempiternal "*En revenant de la Revue*," we proceeded to the Alcazar, where the General was invited to a *vin d'honneur*. Like most military men, he has a splendid appetite, and eats and drinks well at table; but during

this long succession of *vins d'honneur*, champagne parties, and receptions, he followed the golden rule and avoided "mixing his liquors," never drinking champagne or punch after claret, coffee, and cognac. He usually chinked glasses, sipped a drop, and then left the glass on the table. This was "good business" for any ardent admirer, and there was always one, who might be burning to drink out of the General's glass.

Near the Alcazar a man who cried out "*À bas Boulanger!*" was hooted, maltreated, and nearly divested of his clothing by the furious crowd. What incensed the people was the fact that this man was quite unknown in the town, and they did not like a total stranger coming amongst them and trying to stir up discord during a *fête* day. In this town we kept an exact account of the number of persons who called on the General. There were just 4,800—old men and women, young men and girls, of all classes of society, and this naturally entailed shaking hands 4,800 times. We then returned to the Alcazar, where there were quite 2,000 people, packed like sardines. The General was obliged to make another speech, three times were the doors knocked in, and at last the crowd outside climbed up to the windows, so that at one moment there was a head over every pane of glass. This resulted in causing total darkness inside. An altercation then would have led to a fearful slaughter, but there were, fortunately, nothing but friendly Boulangists inside.

On leaving the Alcazar, one gentleman roared out "*Vive Floquet!*" and this witty, well-timed cry was received with such great favour that the orginator was obliged to run for dear life and hide himself in a cellar until the procession had gone past. At last we got away and proceeded to Hirson, but before arriving there we met with what all the correspondents agreed on calling the most astonishing reception of the tour. It was at a small country station, Anor, where we had only a minute or two to stop. A large

crowd—large, we mean, for such a small town—had invaded the station. There were men and women and children all along the train, many of the women weeping with emotion, determined to see the General at any price, pushing past the solitary gendarme, and boldly opening the carriage door. They held their children for him to kiss, they shook hands with him, they wept tears of joy at the sight of him, and moved by their sincere emotion the most indifferent amongst us. Had not Pandore, the gendarme and the railway people used force, we should have spent the night at Anor. Even after the train had started the mothers held their children to be kissed by the General, who gave his last shake of the hand just as he was about to have his arm cut off by the hanging part of the water tank.

The reception at Hirson resembled all the others: there was the same enthusiasm, the same band playing "*En revenant de la Revue.*" This was really unnecessary as far as we were concerned, for we had heard it sung, played, and whistled so often that we could not get it out of our heads. Like the poor, it was always with us: we dreamed of it at night, and it had become so graven on our memories that three days after returning to Paris we frequently caught ourselves unconsciously humming this haunting air. In the evening there was a popular banquet, and then all was over; the last ceremony had been performed, and we were to return to the City of Light the next morning at an early hour.

On going to our hotel, thoroughly exhausted, dying with fatigue, we found that some wag had changed the names on the bedroom doors, so that we spent an hour in finding our rooms and our luggage. Loud and deep were the imprecations against this joker, who certainly would have spent a bad quarter of an hour had we discovered him.

The next morning, at seven o'clock, we were on our way to Paris. There were people to see the General pass at all the railway

stations *en route*, and at Lens there were two hundred workmen who had each taken a ticket, costing sixpence, for the pleasure of seeing and shaking hands with their Deputy.

"General," said the spokesman of the party, "we don't want you to make us millionaires, but there are some reforms that really ought to be effected, and we expect them from you."

At Asny-Piron there was a similar scene: wherever Boulanger went there arose a cry of misery, mingled with an expression of hope and confidence that he would be able to improve matters.

We were getting to the end of our journey, and it was quite time: Boulanger was terribly hoarse from constant speaking, and really could not tell whether he had a right hand or not, so often had it been wrenched by the brawny fists of his admirers, whose hearty shake of the hand typified the sincerity of their sentiments. As to the pressmen, they were thoroughly worn out. During the last five days we had not had more than fifteen hours in bed.

We arrived in Paris at ten o'clock, and the General immediately drove to his hotel. Nothing struck us more forcibly than the rapidity with which all the members of the party disappeared on arriving in Paris: they plunged into their carriages or cabs, each one driving off in a different direction, and men who had lived one common life for days became total strangers again, only meeting by accident on the boulevards. The morning of any fresh departure we were, however, sure to meet again, and each one fell into his place as naturally as if he spent his life on the road.

Thus this memorable journey was over: no more banquets, no more speeches, no more "*En revenant de la Revue*," no more rushing in search of rooms, no more sleeping on the railway, etc., etc. Each one looked forward to a few days' rest; but, alas! there is no rest for the popular, for at 12.30 the General and Count Dillon, who had just had time to take a bath and perform their toilet,

were sitting down at lunch with a party of political friends who had assembled to welcome them back to Paris, congratulate them on their splendid journey—and arrange for the next move on the political board.

A curious detail, well worth noting: during the whole time we were in the north, we had not a drop of rain, whilst the afternoon of our return to Paris it poured in torrents, and we had precisely the same experience during the subsequent tours. "Boulanger's weather" is just as legendary in France as "Queen's weather" is in England.

About two months after this, a journey into Brittany was decided on, and we left Montparnasse railway station at 8 a.m. on the 7th of July for Antrain, where we were to pass the night. It would be insipid to recount day by day the various incidents of this and subsequent journeys; we will therefore confine ourselves to noting the most important incidents that occurred.

All the women thought he looked much younger than he really was, and we frequently heard the exclamation, "Why, he's quite a young man!"

At Avranches a big, strapping fellow nearly fainted away with emotion after having shaken hands with the General.

At Antrain the General dined with twenty mayors at the house of his friend, M. René le Herissé, the popular deputy for the district. Here occurred a very romantic incident, which has, up to the present, remained a secret. A young and handsome journalist, the representative of a Paris paper, was introduced to the daughter of one of the principal inhabitants of the town during the garden party given by M. le Herissé. He made such an impression on the romantic young lady by his personal charms, his wit, and his gallantry, that the fair maid of Antrain positively lost her heart, and his departure the next day was a bitter trial to her. What was his astonishment, two months later, whilst staying with some

friends at their country seat, on receiving from the love-stricken lass a pretty letter, in which she said that, having at last overcome all maidenly bashfulness, she had determined to take advantage of its being leap-year, to make a proposal. Then followed one of the prettiest idylls that even a young girl of nineteen could imagine. She explained her pains so ingenuously, and painted the future, *when they should be together*, in such glowing colours, that the Parisian, though somewhat sceptical, as they all are, could not help being deeply touched by this artless romance of which he was the hero. Hardly knowing what to think or do, he postponed his answer from day to day, so that the charming creature is still waiting for a reply to her leap-year proposal.

At Rennes, his native place, the General had a splendid reception. The mayor of the city was the moving spirit of these demonstrations, and this functionary would certainly have been dismissed from his office had not the Government been warned that should the mayor be dismissed the whole municipal council would follow him, and that the population would elect the same men again. The General did not go to visit his birthplace, for the simple reason that the house had been pulled down years before.

At Dol there was a curious demonstration. One hundred children came on the platform and sang Boulangist songs. A very curious effect was produced by this rustic choir, all wearing a large straw hat, known as the "*Boulange*," the singers being so excited at the sight of the General that they hardly had courage to commence: each one stood nudging his neighbour, as much as to say, "Why don't you begin?"

At Saint Malo the reception was equally enthusiastic. During the visit to the magnificent Casino at Paramé the General was charmed to hear his march played in the drawing-room, and on passing that way found the piano occupied by a dashing English

girl, who flushed with pleasure when the General went forward and thanked her for her delicate attention.

The following day the General and his intimate friends proved the strength of their stomachs by eating three "square" meals before one o'clock—a breakfast at starting, an elaborate lunch at a friend's house at ten o'clock, and at twelve o'clock a veritable banquet at Fougères, where the reception was one of the most brilliant he had met with. There the people were so enthusiastic that they actually tried to prevent the General leaving their town. The departure was a really grand sight: the principal streets were occupied by the military, but one could see that the soldiers were equally well disposed towards the General as the inhabitants. The railway station yard was closed and guarded by a strong cordon of infantry, but the crowd surged forward like a torrent and carried everything before it, passing into the station with the General's carriage. It would have been criminal to resist such a movement, all the more so from the fact that the crowd was perfectly good-humoured and orderly, bent on one thing, and that was to see the last of the General.

We were inside the station at the time, and observed with amazement that though the soldiers resisted, it was only for form's sake,—indeed, they appeared really pleased to have to give way, and were as eager to see the ex-Minister of War, who had done so much for them during his term of office, as the inhabitants themselves.

At Le Mans the General gave a dinner to all his friends and the journalists who had accompanied him on the tour. This dinner was a marvel of delicacy: although only ordered at midday, everything was ready by six o'clock, including beautifully engraved menu cards, with the General's monogram in wax, holding a bunch of ribbons composed of the national colours.

We naturally thought the manifestations were over, but during

dinner the General received a card from a Government official, on which he had written, "Pray, do not hide yourself; there are five thousand people here who want to see you." And this was a fact: the people had ranged themselves alongside the railway for half a mile, and cheered frantically as the train passed. At 11.30 we arrived at Montparnasse; the whole party disappeared with the usual lightning rapidity, and thus ended another very pleasant tour.

The visit to the Charente Inférieure was equally successful; the people of Rochefort, La Rochelle, Saintes, and the Ile de Ré were mad with delight at the sight of the General. The entry into La Rochelle, after the visit to the Ile de Ré, was perhaps the most triumphal procession of the tour: the whole country seemed to be collected in the town to welcome the Boulangists.

During the journey to Saintes, which was performed by night, Boulanger, Count Dillon, and two other friends, occupied the middle of a saloon carriage, whilst the other compartments were given up to the rest of the General's suite and the journalists. We shared a compartment with the representative of a Paris newspaper and a Conservative deputy for the Charente Inférieure, who had asked to join us, although not exactly a Boulangist. He well repaid us for our hospitality, for, being a witty, vivacious man, he made our journey down a most enjoyable one.

He regaled us with various anecdotes about Napoleon III. and the Imperial Court, including a very curious one concerning the Prince Consort and the Empress Eugénie, which would be quite out of place in a serious work like this; told us all about his wife, and his baby, a marvel of beauty and precocious wit, sang us various songs, including, "*Partant pour la Syrie*," and "*En revenant de la Revue*," and actually wound up the proceedings by dancing a *pas seul*, just as the nimble creatures in "Faust up to date" are wont to do.

Our laughter was so loud and hearty that it attracted attention in the General's compartment, and Count Dillon actually came in to see us, for the purpose, as he said, of enjoying the fun. But, alas! at his advent, our lively deputy toned down considerably, losing all his wit and humour. About one o'clock we went to sleep until six, when our friend shook us both, and said very seriously,—

"Wake up, wake up, and make yourselves look smart; *you are now in my department!*"

It was fortunate for us he did so, for he received small deputations at each station. All traces of last night's hilarity had disappeared: he was now a serious representative of the people, and shook hands with his constituents, asked after their wives, their families, and their crops with a touching solicitude which we could not help admiring.

At Jonzac a new element of political tactics was introduced by the authorities in their vain endeavour to arrest the Boulangist movement: 200 school children were furnished with whistles, and received *2d.* each to go to the station and whistle the General. Every child delights to make a noise of some sort, and they naturally trooped to the station and played on their instruments very conscientiously. But, alas! when an enterprising Boulangist offered them *3d.* each for their whistles, they could not withstand the temptation and accepted the offer with glee. Those who sold them started off through the town singing Boulangist songs, whilst the buyers took up a hundred whistles in a basket to the General. At twelve o'clock, when the peasants began to arrive in the market, the children gradually disappeared, and at three o'clock, when the reception was held, the town had become quite Boulangist.

At St. Jean d'Angely we are bound to say the reception was not favourable. This was not astonishing, seeing that the opposition

candidate was mayor of the town, and that he and the Government had fortified with people hostile to the General the stronghold of this second-hand Trinity, composed of the Government, the Opportunist clique, and the opposition candidate.

On arriving within a mile of St. Jean d'Angely, the General was met by some friends who had come out to warn him that the Opportunists were in strong force, and had determined to throw his carriage into the ditch at the entrance to the town. Naturally the General and his suite smiled at this, but thanked their local partisans, who immediately surrounded the carriage and thus formed a bodyguard. We soon came into the midst of a strong force of whistlers, the majority of whom were strangers to the town, and our progress through the streets was made amid a din of whistling, cheering, hooting, and groaning, which we shall never forget.

When the *cortége* arrived on the square near the church, we suddenly heard a shot fired, and then another. It was some one firing at the General! Fortunately, there stood close to the would-be assassin a brave and energetic retired officer, Rabarot, who immediately threw himself on the aggressor, and in the struggle was wounded by another shot. The gendarmes, far from taking part with the victim, actually arrested the courageous Rabarot on a charge of assault and battery, pretending he had struck his opponent with a stick! It would be impossible to describe the tumult that followed this exciting scene: the people surged up round the General's carriage, the mounted gendarmes careered around in the wildest style, crushing people under their horses' feet, and waving their swords about in a very dangerous way. One of the lieutenants actually struck one of his own men by mistake, so anxious was he to butcher the Boulanger people. This unfortunate victim of his superior's misplaced zeal just missed getting a very ugly wound in the region of the neck.

The General and his friends immediately stopped, got out of their carriage, and went to pay a visit to the wounded man, who was being attended to in a chemist's shop by a friendly doctor. At last they arrived at the hotel where they were to dine, and the General was delighted to learn the wounded man was well enough to come and dine with him, and naturally gave him the place of honour at table.

The aggressor turned out to be a friend of the mayor's, so that the Boulangists might have said that their opponent, knowing he could not beat them in a fair way, wanted to get Boulanger "improved off the face of the earth" before the day of the elections. Notwithstanding this accident, or, rather, thanks to it, the General had a good reception after all, and his departure took place under much more favourable circumstances. A friend of his summed up the situation by saying:

"General, this shot will be worth five thousand votes to you, when the affair gets known throughout the department."

And such was really the case. He had, moreover, met with such a splendid reception in all other parts that he could afford to smile at this slight *contretemps*, and returned to Paris with the certainty of being elected deputy for charente Inférieure.

His next journey was to the department of the Somme. The first town he stopped at was Amiens, and the first thing he saw was a box of whistles, which had burst open, the box being addressed to a late Cabinet Minister, member for the town.

"Ah! ah!" said he, "this is the Government music; we shall have a first-class reception!"

Notwithstanding the Government whistles, he was very cordially received, and started off for a tour through the department. At Péronne his reception was one of the most brilliant he had met with anywhere, the whole town turned out to meet him, and the place had a holiday look which was very inspiriting.

At Doullens the Government had blocked the town with soldiers, gendarmes, and police, and we had the utmost difficulty in getting to the hotel. After our arrival, and up to eleven o'clock, the environs of the hotel looked like a town in a state of siege; the streets were lined with soldiers, heavily accoutred, and bivouacking as if on active service, ready to march at a moment's notice in any direction.

The Sub-prefect, who was responsible for these absurd measures, was at the railway station in person, and looked like a good citizen going out for a day's fishing. Imagine to yourself a big, stout, red-faced man, wearing a coarse, cork helmet, rough frieze suit, dirty gaiters, and thick boots, and carrying a bludgeon that would have made a Connemara "bhoy" sigh with envy. This elegant representative of the Athenian Republic allowed the General and one or two of his friends to squeeze out of the railway station, whilst he kept all the others back until they had "shown their papers," which, being interpreted, meant, who could prove they were not Boulangists. He allowed the General's secretary to pass with the flattering remark, "that he did not look like a suspicious character," but a few individuals without papers and wearing the Boulanger colours, were, according to the French expression, "placed at the disposal of the police." They were released the next morning, after having spent the night at the police station, ruminating over the style in which this astounding functionary interpreted those "just laws of the Republic" about which M. Ranc has had so much to say.

Notwithstanding the soldiers, the police, and the Sub-prefect's cork hat and bludgeon, which he sported until midnight, an immense crowd came to call on the General, and the dinner was an immense success.

The peaceful, impartial inhabitants of Doullens were so exasperated at the vexatious measures taken by their intelligent authorities that many who would never have voted at all plumped

for Boulanger, so that this town gave him an immense majority, thus proving the futility of such childish, stupid obstruction, which had everywhere defeated its own ends.

At Montdidier we had the pleasure of meeting a very fine specimen of the Opportunist mayor. This extraordinary functionary had asked for a regiment of cavalry to maintain order in a small town, composed of the most peaceful people in the world, people whose only desire was to go and meet the General, cheer him, follow him, sing to him, shake hands with him, accompany him to the station, and give him a hearty parting cheer. They could have done this without the aid of five hundred mounted men, but the mayor was not of that opinion; and this was, after all, very fortunate for Boulanger, for it gave his *cortége* an imposing, official appearance it would not otherwise have had. The General, therefore, got an escort after his own heart—sympathetic gendarmes and soldiers, who kept back the whistling hooters and managed to let the Boulangists slip through.

A comic incident occurred at the railway station. The irrepressible mayor was there, and, to his horror, met the mayor of a neighbouring town carrying a bouquet of red carnations, and showing unmistakable signs of being on the General's side. The Opportunist mayor remonstrated with his Boulangist colleague, but the latter was in no mind to endure this, so he simply "dabbed" the bouquet in the mayor's face, saying,—

"Smell that; it will do you good," at the same time crying out: "*Vive Boulanger!*"

The irate Opportunist mayor wanted to have his colleague arrested for having raised a "seditious cry," but M. Turquet, a Boulangist deputy, approached him, raised his hat politely, and told him who he was.

"Pray, Mr. Mayor, do you think it illegal to cry out '*Vive Boulanger!*'?"

"Yes, sir; it creates a disturbance, and such a thing cannot be tolerated."

"But, Mr. Mayor," continued the urbane M. Turquet, "suppose I were to cry out '*Vive Carnot!*' what would you do in that case?"

"I would run you in!" roared the infuriated mayor, so beside himself with rage that he hardly knew what he was saying.

The General, his friends, and the bystanders burst into a hearty laugh at this ludicrous reply, and the incident was brought to a close by the mayor leaving the railway station in a frame of mind which boded ill for Mrs. Mayor's quietude that night.

After visiting various other towns, where they were equally well received, the General and his friends brought their triumphal journey to a close, and returned to Paris early on Sunday morning, where they awaited with the utmost confidence the results of the elections, which were all three fixed for that day (the 15th of August). The Government, always on the alert for committing a stupid, childish blunder, had chosen that day, thinking Boulanger would not have time to attend to the three properly. Cruel error! as they found out on that memorable Sunday evening.

On the 2nd of December, the General went to Nevers, where, notwithstanding the rumour that he and his friends were to be arrested *en route*, they arrived all right, and met with a cordial reception. There he delivered an important speech, in the course of which he referred to the political career of Napoleon III., and pointed out what he considered to be the fatal mistakes made by the Emperor during his reign. This speech was naturally the object of much comment, and certain amateur politicians thought it a good opportunity to establish a parallel between Boulanger and the Emperor, coming to the conclusion that as the situations were somewhat the same, Boulanger would naturally be forced to make the same blunders Napoleon had made. They probably

forgot that there is such a thing as progress, and that one man is capable of seeing and profiting by another's folly or errors.

The Government faction naturally declared that Boulanger had chosen this date, the anniversary of the third Napoleon's *coup d'état*, in a spirit of defiance, and as a sort of reminder of what would happen should he ever be placed in a similar position.

Nothing could have been more absurd or further from the truth, the fact being that the banquet had at first been fixed for the *previous* Sunday, November 25th, but several deputies having important engagements for that day which they could not put off, it was arranged that it should take place on the following Sunday, which happened to be the 2nd of December. Strange to say, no one observed the political significance of the date until all the arrangements were so far advanced that it would have been impossible to change them even had it been desirable to do so.

The last journey of this description the General undertook was to Tours, on the 17th of March, 1889, to attend a banquet given him by his partisans in the department of Indre et Loire.

The departure took place without much excitement, and the journey down was not marked by any special incident. On arriving at Tours, however, the interest quickly revived.

Faithful to their policy of petty vexation and annoyance, the Opportunist Government faction had arranged for a parade of troops, which was as useless as it was stupid. When the *cortège* arrived, after a long *détour*, at the gates of the town, the gendarmes allowed the General's carriage to pass, and closed them immediately afterwards, thus cutting him off from all his friends. These latter, and hundreds of inhabitants of the town, who had a perfect right to pass through the gates, were obliged to make another *détour* of about two miles to catch up with the General. However, as a great many of them were in carriages, they did not mind this, and caught up with the General long before he arrived at his hotel.

As they went along the crowd increased, so that on arriving at the Hôtel de Bordeaux there was an immense concourse of people: all Tours and the surrounding district seemed to be following the General. There were, of course, a few whistlers, but they being friends of M. Daniel Wilson, the sinister hero of the Decorations and other scandals, their opposition was really a compliment to honest people. Moreover, the celebrated cry invented in Paris, "Down with all swindlers!" sufficed to reduce them to silence. It was surprising to see how quickly they recognised and took unto themselves this appellation.

At three o'clock precisely the General took his seat at the *table d'honneur*, which ran along a raised platform from end to end of the immense room; he was surrounded by his Parisian friends, MM. Naquet, Turquet, Millevoye, etc., the local Committee, and several mayors of neighbouring towns. The banquet was one of the most successful and certainly the largest we had seen anywhere. Fourteen hundred guests sat down, and were all served as quickly and as orderly as if they had been in a first-class restaurant. The greatest enthusiasm, good fellowship, and good humour reigned throughout the dinner. When the band struck up the celebrated "*En revenant de la Revue*" the enthusiasm knew no bounds, the faces of the whole audience positively beamed; they stamped their feet, they cheered, and chinked their glasses with their forks to keep time with the music, and the whole scene was extremely animated.

The speeches were numerous and important, especially the General's, who had seized this occasion to make a declaration concerning the religious question, which satisfied both Republicans and Conservatives by its broad spirit of tolerance.

At seven o'clock, after the banquet was over, the General had the greatest difficulty in making his way back through the crowd, all anxious to see him, shake hands with him, and to speak to him.

At half-past seven, he commenced an open reception at the Hôtel de Bordeaux which lasted for three hours, during which he received an immense number of people. As usual, they all went away delighted with their reception: he found a kind word for every one. One poor old woman, bent with age, hobbled in and said,—

"Ah, General, I vowed I would kiss you before I died!"

Quick as thought the General gave her a hearty kiss, shook hands with her, and said with a good-humoured smile,—

"And now, don't die till I come and kiss you again."

The poor old woman went away fairly delighted with her visit, and you may depend that her native village rang with the praises of "*Le Brav' Général.*"

At 10.30, the General sat down to supper with a few intimate friends, and about two hours after took the train for Paris, where we arrived at six o'clock.

Naturally there were two hundred policemen to guard the station, though there was not the least sign of a crowd. However the two hundred *sergents de ville*, determined, like the celebrated Roman, not to lose a day, contrived to arrest between them an enthusiastic Boulangist, M. Fournier, who had been to Tours with the General, and who, not able to shake hands with him, determined to say good-bye by crying out "*Vive Boulanger!*"

The gallant two hundred advanced as one man, and the author of this "seditious cry" was marched off to the station by the policemen as if he had been a vulgar pickpocket. A friend who protested against this high-handed style of going to work was at once arrested and placed with his fellow criminal, but they did not keep them long in durance vile: the superintendent of police ordered them to be released as soon as he heard the nature of the "charge."

At 6.30, the General and Captain Guiraud were bowling

along the Champs Elysées on their way home, followed by M. Xavier Feuillant and a friend in another brougham. The few workmen about could not guess that the chief of the National party was amongst them at that early hour, so that we heard no cry of "*Vive Boulanger!*" as we certainly should have done had they known who was in the carriage.

At nine o'clock, the General was at his post, directing operations, receiving visitors, and working as hard as if he had spent the night in bed.

And yet there are simple souls who do not hesitate to say and even write that this man thinks of nothing but fashionable balls, succulent dinners, *fêtes*, and functions of all kinds!

CHAPTER XII.

BOULANGER'S POLITICAL CAREER.

THE General had hardly got back to Paris from his visit to Brittany before he was challenged to a duel by Charles Floquet, then Prime Minister, who had considered himself offended by the epithet of "impudent liar," hurled at him by Boulanger in the Chamber of Deputies on the 12th of July.

The duel, hastily arranged between midnight and three a.m. of the 13th of July, took place the same morning in Count Dillon's park at Neuilly. M. Clémenceau, with an exquisite tact and delicacy quite worthy of the man, accepted the office of second to Charles Floquet, against a colleague with whom he had once been on such friendly terms.

Without going into the details of the duel, we may say that, after a hard fight, the General slipped, just as Floquet was making a furious lunge at him ; as he slipped, his adversary's sword flew up and caught him in the neck, causing a dangerous wound between the carotid and jugular veins. The weapon remained in the General's neck until the latter took it out with his left hand and passed it to Clémenceau. Boulanger wanted to resume the fight; but the seconds positively refused to allow this, and insisted on leading him to the house, where his wound was carefully attended to by his friend, the eminent Doctor Léon Labbé, who had come to Neuilly at the General's special request.

Before the duel the Countess Dillon had locked up all her

servants in a part of the house looking quite away from the spot where the fight was to take place, and she herself naturally remained away until all was over, when her services unfortunately came into requisition as nurse to the General. During the fight, one devoted military friend of the latter's had slipped behind some shrubs, and was fervently praying that he might triumph over his adversary. "*Mon Dieu! mon Dieu! Faites qu'il tue ce cochon de Floquet!*"

When he saw that Floquet had wounded the General, he was at first beside himself with rage, and afterwards burst into tears, positively refusing to go away until he had shaken hands with and spoken to the General.

The result of the duel having been published by the newspapers about midday, an immense crowd soon besieged the house at Neuilly, and we were obliged to have the gates closed and a man placed outside to answer questions. Hundreds of telegrams arrived from all parts, the house was full of anxious friends, the telephone bell was constantly ringing, every one wanted news of the General. Altogether it was a most exciting, and at the same time, anxious moment; for the doctors looked very serious indeed, and declined to give a decided opinion as to the patient's condition, thus increasing the anxiety felt by all. Many thought he could not possibly recover, the only one who maintained a calm and cheerful appearance being Count Dillon, who said, the day of the duel, that in three weeks' time the General would be on horseback again. Though all were not equally hopeful, yet his demeanour had a good influence on those around him, and moreover enabled him to bear up and do the immense deal of work that naturally fell on his shoulders as the General's *alter ego*.

Doctor Gautier, who remained with the General night and day until his complete recovery, and who, strange to say, died two months afterwards, remarked at the time:

"If any one had tried to make such a wound on a corpse with the most delicate instrument, it would have been impossible to do so without cutting either the jugular or the carotid vein. It is a most miraculous wound."

Four doctors came to visit the General regularly, first twice, then once a day; and their bulletins were telephoned to the principal newspapers, as well as to a number of private friends who had asked for them. A copy of the bulletin was posted up daily outside the gates for the benefit of the public, numbers of whom came and read it with the utmost eagerness, anxious to have news of the wounded man. The house was daily besieged by immense numbers of friends, a great book was filled with the signatures of visitors who had called; the ladies especially were wonderfully anxious, and some would stay all the afternoon, in the hope of going away with a comforting bit of news. One lady, a foreign countess, wanted to stay all night in the porter's lodge; and that functionary's wife had the greatest difficulty in convincing her that such a thing was impossible.

During the whole time of the General's illness, telegrams, letters, bouquets, and baskets of delicious fruit came pouring in from all quarters, and four secretaries were kept busy answering the enormous correspondence created by this dramatic incident in his career. At the house in the Rue Dumont d'Urville the crowd was just as great, and the correspondence equally heavy; though the bulletin was fixed on the wall outside, this was not enough for a great many, and they insisted on seeing the General's principal secretary, who could, of course, tell them nothing more.

As might be expected, Boulanger did not make a very docile patient, and those who nursed him with such tender care found him, at times, somewhat difficult to manage. Naturally the close confinement was very irksome to a man accustomed to such an exceedingly active life as he had been leading, and this had a

certain influence on his temper, occasionally making him rather cross and peevish. But his cheery, jolly nature soon asserted itself, so that these intervals of peevishness never lasted very long.

The reporters, the artists of the illustrated journals, the correspondents of the foreign newspapers never seemed to leave the place from morning till night, always on the look out for any details that would serve to make an article on the all-engrossing subject. They sketched everything: the house, the place where the duel was fought, the General's bedroom, and even the neat handmaiden who had been specially appointed to attend to the patient. The spot where the duel took place long remained an object of great curiosity to all Count Dillon's visitors, especially those from the provinces, who insisted on making a pious pilgrimage to the place, and generally favoured us with a criticism of the ground, tending to show that had they been chosen to represent the General, they would never have selected such a bad *terrain*.

One enterprising knight of the lead pencil, desiring to initiate his readers into the mysteries of a private secretary's duties, applied to us for information on this interesting point. With that charming affability of which all Boulangists possess the secret, we readily placed ourselves at his disposal. Bidding him sharpen his pencil, and fetch out his tablets, we commenced:

"You see, in a situation like ours, there is a good deal to do; in the morning, at half-past four, we have to take up the Count's shaving water, clean his boots, lead the dog——"

Here we heard a dire yell, and saw a fleeting figure disappear in the direction of the front gate. The reporter had fled, and is probably still running. His readers are therefore quite in the dark about this exciting subject.

As an instance of the conscientious way in which these gentlemen fulfil their duties, we may mention that during the General's convalescence, the representative of a Paris paper came down to

write a general description of the Count's house, etc. Espying a pretty little Swiss *châlet* in the park, he said to us :

"That's where you do your correspondence when you want to be quite quiet, I suppose ?"

"Oh ! dear no ; never been inside the place."

"Well, that doesn't matter ; it's a picturesque detail, and will look very well in my description."

The next morning his readers had the satisfaction of learning that in the park was an elegant Swiss *châlet*, in which the Count's hard-worked secretary usually took refuge, "far from the madding crowd," for the purpose of getting through his most important correspondence.

Such is the veracious way in which history is written !

During this time the General's friends had another cause for anxiety : he was a candidate in the Department of the Ardêche, and his illness was naturally not calculated to increase his chances of success. Though still in a critical state, he contrived to sit up and write out a manifesto for the electors, which was lithographed and sent throughout the department, to prove that he was not dead, as his opponents had more than once announced. Of course no one was surprised to find that under the circumstances the General did not obtain a majority in this department, and the Government naturally concluded, and even announced with a great flourish of trumpets, that Boulangism was dead, if Boulanger was not.

The fact is, the General and his fortunes really touched bottom just at that time ; we had never seen the party at such a low ebb. His illness, the defeat in the Ardêche, the noisy triumph of the Government, had led to a great falling off amongst his partisans, that portion, at least, who consider that the pursuit of any political object should be a succession of triumphs, banquets, and *fêtes*. But this state of affairs, far from discouraging the General

and his real friends, served to spur them on to those gigantic efforts which culminated in the brilliant triple victory of the 19th of August. The fair-weather friends then returned in great force, and were profuse in their congratulations, positively persuading themselves that they had contributed to bring about the triumph they were engaged in celebrating.

It may not be uninteresting to give a brief sketch of the General's method of conducting his elections in the departments. His organization was based on the French departmental administration. The chief of the electoral forces was Count Dillon, who concentrated everything at Neuilly. From there the departmental chiefs took their orders, and there they sent daily reports, and made known their wants and wishes.

Each department was entrusted to a sort of electoral Prefect, who was responsible for the success of the election in his region. After having received his instructions from the General and Count Dillon, he at once took up his quarters in the principal town of the department, and stopped there till the election was over. His staff was composed of a general secretary, a sufficient number of clerks, and a journalist, the latter superintending the distribution of newspapers, pamphlets, portraits, etc., throughout the department. He was also called upon to sustain the local polemics by means of posters and articles published in the newspapers devoted to the General's cause.

The Department of the Somme, which we will take as an example, was divided into five *arrondissements*, or districts. Amiens and the district was managed by the Prefect himself, whilst Abbeville, Doullens, Péronne, and Montdidier were each confided to a "Sub-prefect." The latter appointed an agent in each canton, and this agent had a trustworthy man in each village in the canton. The latter acted as bill-poster, and distributed the letters, circulars, portraits, and the thousand and one documents which

serve to teach the electoral idea how to shoot, or rather vote. All this necessary "paper" was sent direct from Paris to Amiens as it was required; from there a supply was sent to each Sub-prefect, who sent a portion to each of his cantonal agents, who divided it amongst their parish agents as they thought proper. As far as possible, the cantonal agents were recruited on the spot; and this was always the case with the village agent.

The Prefect and Sub-prefects are usually men well accustomed to this delicate manipulation of the masses, which requires a lightness of hand not always to be found amongst the provincial partisans. The latter, moreover, if employed in a prominent position, would be exposed to a great deal of local jealousy that a total stranger would not be likely to excite. Whilst it is evident the Prefect must be a man of great tact, good address, and energy, the Sub-prefects, though a less superior class of men, require a great many qualifications; they must be indefatigable in action, capable of maintaining discipline amongst men of all sorts, able to work day and night without thinking of going to bed, to take a glass of wine whenever invited, make an impromptu political speech, organize committees, receptions, banquets, etc.; and finally, be quite capable of knocking a man down in a clean, workmanlike manner, should their own safety necessitate such a feat.

When the ground has been thoroughly prepared, and all the canvassing has been done, the agents throughout the department have nothing to do but to keep the people up to voting-point till the all-important Sunday, supply them with any circulars, addresses, or contradictions of enemy's lies that may be issued by the General at the last moment, and, most important point of all, see that each elector shall have at least three voting papers. The preparation of these voting papers is a most important matter, any deviation from the official model, either as regards paper or printing, always being seized upon by the Government as an excuse

for cancelling the vote. Boulanger generally waited till the last moment, got one of his opponent's papers, and adopted exactly the same model. On the day of the election, he must have men at each voting section to keep a sharp eye on the returning officers, who might be tempted to manipulate the votes and "shuffle" the General out of a lot intended for him. A case of this kind occurred in the Department of the Ardêche, where Boulanger's Prefect actually sat at a window with several friends, and saw dozens of votes subjected to these sleight-of-hand operations. The case was brought before the Courts; but this was a purely platonic satisfaction, and not a remedy, robbing Boulanger not being a punishable offence in France just now. As soon as the agent can get the results, complete or partial, he telegraphs them to his Prefect, who immediately transmits them to Boulanger in Paris.

An individual who plays an important part in all elections is the *camelot*, or professional newspaper seller, who is always a Parisian, recruited in the Rue du Croissant and the Rue Montmartre, the centre of the wholesale newspaper, publishing, and printing trades, the Fleet Street of Paris. These men go into the departments during an election on their own responsibility, for the purpose of disposing of as much "paper" as possible: in fact, the *camelot* is the only one who knows how to get rid of "paper"; even the local journals employ him during the election period, their ordinary men being no good for the work.

During the election in the Department of the Somme, the *Presse*, the *Cocarde*, the *Intransigeant*, and several other journals, were sold in immense quantities by these men, who gave away as a *prime* portraits, biographies, etc., of the General, "paper" which is very popular with the peasants, as it serves to adorn their rooms. Strange to say, the *camelots* will not touch the opposition pictures, etc.; they could not get rid of them.

"What could we do with the *gueules* of such men as Wilson, Carnot, or Ferry?" said a *camelot* to us one day. "Why, the people wouldn't take them if we paid them to do so."

Though these men are quite independent of the General, and work entirely on their own account, they are very favourable to him, and help to spread his popularity wherever they go.

They literally "sing his praises," for besides the Boulangist newspapers, etc., they also colport a collection of Boulangist recitations and songs, written in a strongly patriotic, chauvinistic style, likely to be popular with and touch the hearts of the peasants. They sing these songs in every village they go through, much to the delight of the inhabitants, who thus hear gratis the entire Boulangist repertory, from "*En revenant de la Revue*" to "*L'Epée Brisée*," in which touching reference is made to the breaking of Boulanger's sword by a tyrannical government. Of course, after singing them, the *camelot* offers them for sale, and generally does a good trade. If the paper-makers, printers, booksellers, and photographers of France do not erect a statue to Boulanger, they may fairly be taxed with black ingratitude, and with having failed in what is really a sacred duty, for there is no single man in the country who has done them so much good as the General.

Curious detail, the National Committee never received the news of an election triumph at their offices in the Rue de Sèze; whilst, on the contrary, the restaurant Durand, opposite the Madeleine, has always been a fortunate place for them. The result of the first election in the Nord was received there, and it was not therefore surprising that this place should always be chosen for election nights.

On Sunday night, the 19th of August, the General, his friends, and his partisans assembled at the restaurant Durand to await the results of the three elections. The first floor had been taken, and in the principal room was a table divided into four com-

partments—"SOMME," "CHARENTE INFÉRIEURE," "NORD," and "DIVERS." All the telegrams were first thrown into the last compartment, then sorted into the others. A secretary kept the accounts for each department, announcing the figures from time to time. Mutual congratulations began to be heard as the favourable results arrived, and people came in by hundreds to shake hands with the General, who was naturally delighted with the promising telegrams.

Outside the restaurant there was an animated and enthusiastic crowd, whilst the offices of the *Presse* and the *Cocarde* were surrounded by thousands of people, cheering as each fresh batch of figures appeared on the limelight projections displayed by these newspapers.

By 11.30 the General was morally certain he was elected for the three departments; and about two hours later the officials at the Ministry of the Interior, who had delayed doing it as long as possible, to spite the General, were obliged to communicate the results to the press, showing that Boulanger had triumphed in the three departments. After supper, which was, as may be supposed, a very merry meal, the General took leave of his friends, shaking hands as he passed out with many who had come straight from the theatres to congratulate him. The supper itself was marked by an amusing incident. One of the guests, quite overcome, probably by the heat, had fallen asleep at table; whilst every one around him was laughing and joking, he was safe in the arms of Morpheus, quite oblivious of their mirth. Rochefort, who is as playful as he is witty, commenced by drawing a ring from the sleeping man's finger, when a happy thought struck him. He told the waiter to fetch the bill for the whole night's proceedings, which naturally amounted to a rather heavy sum. This interesting document was placed on the sleeping beauty's plate, and was the first thing that met his gaze when he opened his eyes in the

deserted room about three o'clock that morning. Naturally, he positively refused to pay the bill of a repast he had not ordered, and the affair was settled by his promising to speak to the General about the matter.

The elections being over, and the whole business having been settled in a satisfactory manner, Boulanger and Count Dillon took a well-earned rest, the former leaving France to make a short tour, and the latter going to his country seat, the Ile de Berder, delightfully situated in the Gulf of Morbihan, at the angle of the Auray and Vannes rivers. This was the place so ruthlessly ransacked by the police in their vain endeavours to find compromising papers against the General or any members of the National party.

The Opportunists, before the elections, had announced that Boulanger, destined to a crushing defeat, would no doubt make this his Isle of Elba. They would probably have given a handsome sum, not out of their own pockets, but out of the public purse, for Boulanger's disappearance; but this most obstinate man persists in playing the part of Banquo's ghost, and spoiling their little game in a way calculated to disgust even the most enterprising of commercial patriots. The festive Trappist who was always saying to his fellow Traps, "Brothers, you must die," has been outdone by the General, who, not content with telling the Opportunists they are doomed, gets millions of friends to announce to them the same glad tidings.

Boulanger contrived to elude the various detectives and reporters who had been instructed to watch his movements, so that the newspapers teemed with fanciful reports as to his whereabouts: some saying he was in Paris, some in Norway, some in Spain, some in Brighton; whilst others averred he had gone no farther than Courbevoie, a suburban village just outside the gates of Paris. One enterprising industrial published a puzzle, in the shape of a map of Europe, with the inscription, "Find the General." After

looking for a long time one could perceive his well-known features on the borders of Russia. However, he and Count Dillon returned to Paris the early part of October, and on the 4th they rode to the Bois de Boulogne and paid a visit to Henri Rochefort, who has a summer residence in a pretty corner of the Bois.

During this lull in politics an important event took place, the marriage of Mademoiselle Marcelle Boulanger, the General's youngest daughter, to Captain Driant, his former private secretary and orderly officer. The function was a grand one, and the Opportunists made a great stir over it, owing to the presence of the General's friends of all classes and all parties, and because he attended the religious ceremony. Military officers were not allowed to attend, the police were in strong force, and would not allow the people to get anywhere near the General's carriage; those who cried, *Vive Boulanger!* or *À bas Floquet!* were arrested, and the whole affair was treated by the Government more as a seditious meeting than as a private marriage. Six policemen, accused of displaying too much zeal in favour of the General, were dismissed from the force without pension or compensation. The General, determined that these innocent victims of an imbecile Government should not suffer, took them into his service, and thus inaugurated the policy which he was destined to carry out when the Government began to weed out the Boulangists in the public service. Notwithstanding these petty annoyances, the ceremony was a brilliant success in every respect. The bride was naturally radiant, this being a purely love marriage, the young couple having had to overcome determined opposition from Madame Boulanger, who did not think the captain good or rich enough for her darling daughter. The happy pair, after a short honeymoon trip, left for Tunis, where the captain resumed his regimental duties. This pleasant function having been performed, the General had a little rest, enlivened by several popular banquets

in various parts of Paris, until the 23rd of December, when news was received of the death of M. Hude, one of the deputies for Paris.

As the Opposition had always maintained that, though the General was popular in the provinces, he would not stand the slightest chance in Paris, he determined to "try the case" by standing for the capital, that stronghold of republicanism and radicalism. Immediately on the decree being published, fixing the 27th of January as the date of the election, Boulanger issued a manifesto, and placarded the city with a simple slip bearing the words,—

GÉNÉRAL BOULANGER,
Candidat Républicain.

The election campaign was thus opened as far as he was concerned, but his opponents were not so prompt in their action. They had to come to some understanding amongst themselves, always a very difficult, laborious operation in a camp where concord is an unknown quantity and discipline an eternal stumbling-block. After endless discussions, bickerings, and mutual reproaches, they at length fixed on a gentleman called Jacques to act as their candidate in the campaign which was to scotch the Boulangist serpent. M. Jacques being a distiller, the Government fondly thought they would thus conciliate the publican, "*marchand de vin*" element; but with their usual luck, they found it was the very worst choice they could have made, a Boulangist organ having clearly proved that M. Jacques had always voted at the Municipal Council dead against this powerful and influential corporation.

However, on the 6th of January, M. Jacques formally entered the lists. M. Boulé, a socialist, announced his candidature, and then began what may perhaps be considered as the most gigantic and exciting election campaign that ever took place in one single town or city. On the one hand, there was M. Jacques, backed up by

a Government disposing of millions of money belonging to other people, the armed forces of the capital, the police, and an administrative army ready to go any lengths to effect the defeat of the Boulangists. On the other, stood the General, having nothing but his own personal resources to depend on.

Meetings were held all over Paris; various members of the National party attended them, delivered addresses, and gave the electors all required information on every point connected with the question at issue. These "meetingues," as the Parisians call them, were not always pleasant functions to attend. Towards the close of the campaign the people became rather excited, and the meetings were very tumultuous affairs, frequently degenerating into positive bear gardens. Revolvers were playfully sported, tables and chairs flew about the place as if suddenly endowed with wings, and the gas was frequently turned down in the midst of the proceedings, thus making confusion worse confounded, turning the place into a positive pandemonium. Loaded sticks were brought into requisition, and these weapons dropped down on peaceful citizens' heads, with a dull, heavy thud, causing blood to flow with alarming freedom. This went on at dozens of meetings all over Paris; the opposition would not allow the Boulangists to develop their programme, and thus each political hall became a field of battle, each party carried off its wounded, and closed in its ranks to renew the struggle the next day. Though Boulanger did not approve of this mode of carrying on the campaign, he could not forbid his partisans to defend themselves, and they certainly did so.

The war of posters and proclamations had also begun. Every monument in Paris was decorated with the rival candidates' paper; even M. Boulé, a Socialist candidate, had a few posters, but very few compared with the two principal candidates. The Chamber of Deputies was covered, the walls of the Bank of France

were three inches thick with paper; all along the Rue de Rivoli, wherever there was a friendly hoarding, house, or wall, there the paper war went on. The bills were ordered by hundreds of thousands on both sides; an army of bill-stickers were engaged; no sooner had the Boulangist man put up a poster than a Jacquist man would come along and cover it up, although that is a punishable offence in France. And so it went on day after day. The aspect of one entire quarter would change in the course of a couple of hours; where Boulanger had reigned supreme at three o'clock, Jacques would be the only name visible at five o'clock. The statues on the Place de la Concorde, the tail of the Lion of Belfort on the Place de la République, the steps of the Opera, every available place was utilized, and from one end of the city to the other there was a debauch of flaming posters and manifestoes. The two names were so prominent everywhere, it at last became such an obsession, that we, who were driving about Paris from morning till night, gradually got the impression that there were only two names in the whole city, Boulanger and Jacques.

As to the general election organization, it resembled that in use for the departments, the whole being centred in the hands of Count Dillon, who may be said to have fought this famous victory from his study at Neuilly. There he received all those who came to offer their services, there he organized his staff to perform the thousand and one duties connected with an election campaign, and there came all the Paris district and suburban agents for instructions and to make their daily reports. His house was more like a ministry than a private residence, crowded as it was from morning till night—some early birds, determined to catch the worm, arriving as early as seven o'clock; the telephone was kept going at all hours of the day and night, by printers asking for instructions, agents for supplies of "paper," and the General's secretaries for information of all sorts. The Patriotic League did yeoman service

during this election, and great credit was due to Paul Déroulède, his lieutenants, and his men.

The General himself worked harder than any one, and never got a moment's rest, frequently going without his lunch, absorbed by his correspondence and his receptions. His daily dinners, far from being a source of relaxation, were merely a continuation of the day's business; during dinner and even after he was busy collecting useful information from all sides, favourable and unfavourable, winning over partisans who could not possibly have been reached in any other way.

One remarkable feature about Boulanger's election tactics is the wonderfully courteous, good-humoured style in which he treats his opponents, never going out of his way to insult them or even wound their feelings. This arose from his spirit of fairness, in the first place, and then from a settled conviction that it is always a bad thing to waste powder in advertising your enemies. All the caricatures wherein Jules Ferry was depicted with an abnormally long nose, and the other Opposition leaders in most ludicrous attitudes, were done by people quite independent of Boulanger, who frequently never saw the prints. His opponents were not equally fair in this respect; they pictured him in the most disgusting attitudes, accused him of the most abominable crimes, said he was the son of a money-lender, and the brother of Campi, the murderer. A number of articles were written by a "secret service money" individual, holding up to public opprobrium Boulanger and all his friends; representing them to be a gang of thieves and swindlers; and pamphleteers were hired at the taxpayers' expense to revile everybody and everything connected with Boulangism. In fact, the disgraceful tactics adopted by the Government led thousands of their own partisans to forsake them and vote for Boulanger.

They really pushed absurdity beyond its normal boundaries.

Just when they had the best of reasons for conciliating the Parisians, they actually announced that all the Civil Service *employés* were to be deprived of their annual bonus. This naturally led this numerous body to conclude that their bonus money was to go to pay Jacques' election expenses; and we have no doubt this incident gave the General thousands of votes which would otherwise have gone to his opponent.

Another method invented by the Government to crush out Boulangism was the employment of numbers of police spies to watch the General, Count Dillon, and all the principal members of the National party. None of them could move in any direction without being dogged by these shady gentlemen, who, though they adopted all sorts of disguises, could always be recognised by that nameless air which reveals the *mouchard*. They penetrated the General's house, loafed about outside, disguised as masons, organ-grinders, cabmen, etc., etc., came to the committee rooms at Neuilly, and even had the impertinence to go into the Count's private house. The Count was not at all averse from these gentlemen seeing what was going on, there being nothing to conceal, and nothing on which they could base a report. As a proof of his good-natured attitude towards them, we may mention that he once wrote out a report about himself and his friends for one of them; this man presented it to the Minister, who was so pleased with it that he gave the fortunate *mouchard* two thousand francs, a generosity which did not ruin the Minister, seeing that the money came out of the secret service fund.

Naturally an election like this gave rise to a great many curious and ludicrous incidents. One day the General was exposed to the attack of an amateur assassin, in the person of a celebrated interviewer belonging to the *Figaro*. This gentleman gave as a reason for his extraordinary proceeding that he liked to introduce a little novelty into his interviewing business! This new departure in

journalistic enterprise really amused the General, though he had just then something better to do than to serve as "subject" to inventors of new systems of interviewing. As the operator has published an account of this novel experiment, we will let him speak for himself.

"As usual, the General was walking up and down the room. I approached him and said in a grave voice:

"'General, we are now alone together, and I have a confession to make to you. Your principal enemy has given me five hundred thousand francs to kill you.'

"'Really! That's a good idea of Floquet's.'

"'Don't laugh; I am serious, and am going to kill you, and feel certain of being acquitted. I shall tell the jury that so long as I believed in you I defended you, but saw I was mistaken. I have saved my country.'

"And," continued the *operator*, "I suddenly thrust my hand in my coat pocket. The General also had his hands in his pockets.

"'What!' said I, 'you don't bring out a revolver, to show you have something to protect yourself with in case of attack?'

"'My dear sir,' said the General, 'you may search the whole house, and if you find a revolver, may I be hanged. You are not the first to speak to me of a possible attack, all my friends have done so, but I never take any notice of them. If I had no faith in myself, how could I expect others to have faith in me? And do you know why I never take any precautions? Because I am certain that any one who came here with the intention of killing me either would not do it or *would miss me.*'

"Such is the confidence the General has in his star!"

This revolver incident reminds us of a good story told by a French journalist who was waiting for Count Dillon in the billiard room at Neuilly. We have never been able to ascertain whether it is true or not.

One day a newspaper editor called on Count Dillon at the committee rooms at Neuilly, and made an urgent demand for a rather large sum of money to save his journal from ruin. After fully explaining the affair, he assumed a despairing look, and said in a most dramatic tone,—

"In short, I must either have the money or blow my brains out!"

The Count, knowing his man, certain there was no danger of his putting his threat into execution, asked him to wait till he came back, and left the room. Of course the visitor thought the Count had gone to the house to get the money, and commenced humming "*En revenant de la Revue*" in the liveliest manner possible. In about ten minutes the Count returned with a small mahogany box, which he handed to the editor, saying,—

"My dear sir, I am sorry I cannot give you the money you want; but here is a pair of pistols, ready loaded. I place them at your disposal, together with this office, in which to perform your painful but necessary operation. Adieu!"

And he walked out, leaving the editor in a state of stupefaction more easily imagined than described.

When Boulanger first began to receive the general public, he was naturally interviewed by a great many individuals, who came to assure him of their eternal devotion, offer their valuable services gratis—and borrow a napoleon, or louis, as the French call that coin. He at first allowed himself to be "tapped" rather freely by these enterprising *soi-disant* partisans; but finding that his spare louis disappeared with alarming rapidity, he determined to give five-franc pieces. But thinking this indiscriminate charity might do more harm than good, he determined to stop it altogether, and have nothing to do with any money matters. As soon as any visitor broached the "burning question," the General

would politely tell him he had nothing to do with it, and invariably wound up by saying,—

"Go and see Count Dillon!"

Those who had real business to discuss naturally did so, but your professional beggar, who is seldom a very energetic individual, thought twice before trudging all the way to Neuilly to see an amiable nobleman, who might be absent or unable to receive him when he got there. Speaking of the Count's receptions, reminds us of a visit paid him by Mr. Stuart Cumberland, the thought reader, who, being obliged to wait two hours for his turn, exclaimed rather warmly to his companion,—

"By Jove! it's more trouble to see Count Dillon than to see the queen of England!"

When this was mentioned to the Count, he smiled, and said,—

"Of course it is; her gracious majesty can choose her visitors, whilst I am obliged to receive all comers."

It was during this election that an ingenious journalist utilized that famous cry of "Down with the swindlers!" which gave such offence to the majority of the Opportunist deputies. Why they should have taken this cry unto themselves with such feverish promptitude has always been a most profound mystery to us. Whether the cap fitted them or not, they had the best of reasons for not wearing it; but no, every time the cry was raised they must fain protest in the most energetic manner, as if it were a direct insult to their honourable order.

In fact, we are really surprised some indignant Minister did not get up in the Chamber, and propose that it should be classed with those "seditious cries" about which we have heard so much. "*Vive Boulanger!*" is one, "*How about the sausage?*" is another. This latter extremely impertinent question has the privilege of stirring up the bile of M. Constans, the Minister of the Interior, he being the proud hero of the sausage

adventure. Some wicked wag discovered that he had been concerned in a company-promoting affair, and asserted that his good offices as deputy had been rewarded with a cheque for ten thousand francs *and a Lyons sausage.* The company having come to grief, M. Constans is said to have been compelled by the court to refund the ten thousand francs and the sausage; but as he had eaten the said comestible, he could not very well refund that. The Parisian *gamin* therefore asks, every time he sees him, "*How about the sausage?*" and it must be admitted that this is a very awkward question for a cabinet Minister to be called upon to answer.

At last the eventful Sunday arrived when Paris was to administer to the Government one of the bitterest pills they had ever swallowed, and that is saying a great deal. Strange to say, there was no great animation in any part of the city during the day; people went to the poll in a quiet, orderly way which very much surprised those who know the Parisians' political temperament. They appeared to mean business, and to think that any unnecessary demonstration would be out of place. About eleven o'clock the General proceeded to the Restaurant Durand, accompanied by Count Dillon, and they were shortly afterwards joined by the majority of the members of the National Committee and other friends. The restaurant was soon filled by the principal Boulangists and the chiefs of the Patriotic League, who had arranged to dine there whilst awaiting the results of the election.

In order to create no jealousy, there being several rooms filled with Boulangists, the General dined in a private *salon* with Count Dillon and his son, Pierre Dillon. During dinner, the results began to pour in, each man who arrived announcing a majority in his section. About nine o'clock every one had finished dinner and began to circulate about the restaurant. Mutual congratulations were heard on all sides, and the utmost

good-humour reigned. Déroulède thanked his colleagues, and embraced several of his brother Boulangists; the latter always appearing a touching and curious operation to an Englishman. Everybody wanted to congratulate the General, who was naturally radiant.

Outside the restaurant and in the streets there was a scene of animation and gaiety which would have led any intelligent foreigner to suppose that some popular *fête* was going on. Although the Jacquists knew by this time that their candidate was beaten, there were no signs of ill-humour, they seemed to take their defeat very coolly, as if they had rather expected it; so that the Boulangists and the Jacquists were on very good terms together all the evening.

At half past ten the restaurant people were obliged to close the iron doors, and to admit the favoured ones through an aperture so small that it excluded more than one burly representative of the people anxious to see the hero of the hour.

The Patriotic League, under Paul Déroulède's command, was charged to keep order in the house; and their discipline was so good and so well observed by the men, that their chief himself could not prevail on one of them to allow us to pass down the stairway he was guarding, for the purpose of telephoning to a friend.

"No," said this slave of discipline; "I have orders to let no one pass, and intend to execute them."

"But," said Déroulède, "I gave you those orders myself, and now relax them in favour of this gentleman."

"No; I can't let him pass; such are my orders."

This inflexible *ligueur*, compared with whom the famous Roman sentinel was a mere *enfant de troupe*, kept to his orders; and we descended to the telephone *via* the kitchen, full of admiration for the ultra-military discipline maintained in the Patriotic League.

About 11.30 the General contrived to make his way through the crowd besieging the doorway, determined to get a sight of him, and drove off with Count Dillon to Neuilly, where several intimate friends had received the results by telephone, and had waited to congratulate the fortunate Deputy for Paris.

At one o'clock he returned home to sleep the sleep of the just, perchance to dream he could hear Carnot roaring out, "*Vive Boulanger!*"

Naturally, the General could not achieve such a colossal success as this without receiving a great many congratulations from his friends. Telegrams arrived by scores from all parts of Europe and even America; they poured in from Moscow, St. Petersburg, New York, and Chicago, without mentioning the hundreds from all parts of France. Those from the departments in which the General had already been elected were particularly agreeable to him. He did not, of course, dissimulate the delight he felt at his success, a delight that was very natural and very pleasant to see. There was not a particle of pride about it; he simply appeared like a man who could neither conceal nor feign his satisfaction. We regret that we cannot give a list of the important political personages who came, *the day after the election*, to overwhelm the General with protestations of devotion and congratulations on his success. Nothing in his manner betrayed that he perceived any difference between these mushroom partisans and the devoted friends who had worked hard during the elections, and helped to bring about the success. But there was no confusion in his mind on this point, as may be imagined.

The Ministers, with the delicacy for which they have always been distinguished, had counted on a shameful manœuvre at the last moment to intimidate the Parisians; they had arranged for a telegram from their ambassador in Berlin relating a conversation he had had with Prince Bismarck the day previous to the election.

But they were cruelly disappointed when this famous message arrived. It was such a commonplace, tame affair that Floquet himself was obliged to admit that it would have been dangerous and stupid to publish it.

After this victory the General did not remain idle; his first care was to address a manifesto to his electors, thanking them in the warmest terms for the magnificent majority they had given him. He and his Committee soon had other work prepared for them; for Charles Floquet, thinking such a measure would cripple Boulanger, presented a bill, which was speedily passed, for replacing the voting by lists for the whole department by voting by districts.

This change in the method of voting did not in the least frighten Boulanger; he felt sure of his candidates passing where he might have passed himself, the only thing being that it gave him more work. As he said at the time: "When a Government is condemned to death, it may call in all the doctors in the world to its assistance, death will eventually claim its own. Parliamentary Government being doomed, it now became a question of dragging on a few months longer till the general elections."

Boulanger and all his friends were very anxious that these elections should take place in April, so as not to disturb the Exhibition: but the Government were not of that opinion; besides, it could not be foreseen that in April the Boulangists would be exiles on a foreign shore.

Shortly after this, Floquet, who, when he had entered office, had boldly announced that he was going to scotch Boulangism, was voted by the majority in the Chamber to be an immense fraud, he having scotched nothing whatever. They therefore invented a pretext for relieving him of his functions; the Cabinet was overthrown, and succeeded by one formed by M. Tirard, the famous clockmaker, who had already distinguished himself by his blind hostility to Boulanger. For a singular phenomenon was to be

remarked: no measures were passed, no men were chosen, no step taken without reference to Boulanger; everything likely to injure him was voted with enthusiasm, every man who professed a hatred against him was afforded an opportunity of putting this hatred into practice; the Cabinet spent its time, not in governing the country, but in trying to injure Boulanger.

There is one sacred duty the Opportunists have always conscientiously performed; they have never failed to create good appointments for their friends and their friends' friends. We thought the prolific "ornaments" who are supposed to be the mainstay of the British nation were past masters and mistresses in this noble art of self-help. So would any impartial observer who took the trouble to scrutinise the salaries of the gold-sticks in waiting, who are never in waiting, except at pay-day, gentlemen ushers, who never usher anything except the public money into their private pockets, and grooms in waiting, who would be sorely embarrassed and even indignant were they to be asked to groom their own fiery steeds.

But the Opportunists can give even these professors points at their own game, as the following anecdote from a French paper will prove. The hero of the adventure is the son of a late Minister of Justice, who distinguished himself by the display of as great a horror of the nude as the British matron herself. This brilliant product of Opportunism was, it appears, a "dry fruit," plucked at all his examinations, who had contrived to obtain some Government post at Montpellier. Wanting to spend a few months in Paris with his papa, he is said to have been provided with a "mission" as comic as it was singular. He was appointed to find a means of destroying the may-bugs or cockchafers on the boulevards of Paris. This scientific operation was well rewarded; for he is said to have received his full salary, liberal travelling expenses, and an indemnity of two pounds a day.

If the various Serenes who batten on the British taxpayer do not turn green with envy at this feat, we must admit that we have formed a mistaken estimate of their serene characters.

One of the many schemes tried by a despairing Government to stamp out Boulanger's popularity was the bringing of M. Antoine, the famous deputy for Metz in the German Parliament, to Paris, and setting him up on a patriotic pedestal, as representing the purest form of patriotism, so superior to the noisy, Barnum-like article kept by Boulanger. M. Antoine was trotted round the various Quarters of Paris and to several provincial towns, fêted, fed, and fondled by the Government and the official world generally, so that he probably really thought he was destined to grapple with the Boulanger spectre in good earnest. But, alas! whether M. Antoine saw what a pitiful part Jules Ferry & Co. were making him play, or whether the Opportunists thought the results were not worth the money expended, we cannot say, but "*le grand patriote alsacien*" suddenly disappeared from the Opportunist camp, and probably returned home, meditating on the instability of human greatness and the ingratitude of his Opportunist admirers, who had not hesitated to throw him over the moment they found he did not take as they thought he would.

Meanwhile, the General, after his splendid triumph, had become a greater lion than ever, no big dinner was complete without him, and invitations had to be sent him a month in advance. He was very eclectic in the choice of these invitations: one day he would be amongst the workmen of the populous quarters; the next, with the old nobility in the Champs Elysées; and the following he would dine with some middle-class man, a representative of the industry or commerce of the capital. His object was to consummate the union of the various classes, and prepare the advent of that purely National party which he and his friends have worked so hard to found. Naturally his attitude was exactly the same on all these

occasions: he always professed the same love for the masses, the same love for liberty; nor indeed could he have done otherwise without completely stultifying himself. Many Conservatives, charmed with his *bonhomie*, his frank, unaffected, soldierly bearing, did not hesitate to say that a man like that was quite capable of reconciling them even to a Republic.

Pursuing its usual course as the exterminator of Boulangism, the Tirard Cabinet soon after this attacked the Patriotic League, ostensibly for its action in the Sagallo affair, an unimportant incident, but in reality for the active part it had taken at the triumph of the General at the late election. The principal document on which the Government based its action was one called "Instructions to the Patriotic League."

These instructions were drawn up in order to ensure the perfect electoral organization of the League; but the Government, having seen in them such words as "*permanent mobilization*," "*in case they should try to dissolve the League*," "*organization already tried*," jumped to the conclusion that it was a mobilization for offensive purposes, and that the League was preparing for a *coup de main*, determined to suppress it and prosecute the chiefs. MM. Déroulède, Naquet, Turquet, Laisant, Laguerre, and Richard were prosecuted. The houses of the above gentlemen and all the principal members of the League were searched, but nothing of any importance was found.

After a thousand annoyances and vexations of all sorts, a trial took place, and the Government had the mortification of seeing the Patriotic League men released with a ridiculous fine, nothing whatever having been found against them.

About this time the Duc d'Aumale returned to Paris, his exile having been cancelled by the Government. His return to his native country appeared to have no political importance, and merely gave rise to a good deal of banter and to the printing of a

few very comic caricatures, in which MM. Carnot and Grévy were rather badly treated.

Whilst the petty annoyances against the Patriotic League were going on, there were men clear-sighted enough to see that the attack on the League was a mere blind, and that the man really aimed at was the General himself. Hardly knowing what step to take next, the Government had determined to employ any means for suppressing the Boulangists, and it was rumoured that they intended to arrest the whole party.

CHAPTER XIII.

BOULANGER IN EXILE. BRUSSELS AND LONDON.

ON the evening of the 2nd of April all Paris was thrown into a state of feverish excitement by the report that Boulanger had gone to Brussels. The first news of the matter was published by the *Temps*, an evening journal which has always been hostile to the General, and consequently peculiarly favoured by the Government. This paper contained a fantastical, dramatic account of the General's departure, an account which had evidently been concocted by an aspiring detective, touched up by his superiors, approved by the Ministers, and finally communicated to this friendly newspaper, only too happy to have the *primeur* of such a sensational piece of news.

The author of this elegant composition pretended that the General had disguised himself in a sort of English stable lad's dress, that he was accompanied by a lady, that he had taken and given up an immense number of cabs in order to put any possible *mouchard* off the scent, and had at last slipped into the railway station, slouched on to the platform, wearing a long ulster, a big cap pulled over his eyes, and smoking a cigar so big that it partially concealed the lower part of his features. In fact, this police report was written in such a way, that it looked exactly like an account of the flight of some vulgar cashier who had betrayed his trust.

It is needless to add that this mode of presenting the affair was intended to deceive the public, discredit the General, and render him ridiculous in the eyes of all.

On reading this perfidious production the Paris reporters did not know whether it was true or false, but of course their duty was to ascertain the facts of the case. That evening the General's house in the Rue Dumont d'Urville was literally besieged by a feverish crowd of deputies, reporters, personal friends, and anxious partisans, all burning to know the truth about the matter. The General's secretary, his valet, and Joseph, the legendary page boy, all assured these anxious inquirers that their chief was in Paris, and would certainly be back by seven o'clock to dress for dinner. But this was not enough for the reporters, who, being more or less of the St. Thomas school, wanted to see and shake hands with the General. As he was not there, they determined to go and look for him, and visited all the places where there was the slightest chance of obtaining any news about him. But his most intimate friends were equally in the dark, and all assured the reporters that he could not possibly have left Paris. They themselves went to call on him at his house, to keep the appointments he had made with them the previous day, and it was really amusing to see with what confidence they all declared he could not possibly have left Paris without consulting and advising them.

He was expected to dine that evening with M. Gaston Jollivet, who had invited a party of the smartest people in Paris to meet him; but at the last moment his secretary came, and announced verbally to Madame Jollivet that the General was unfortunately prevented by important business from accepting her gracious invitation. Up to midnight of the 2nd no one in Paris really knew whether Boulanger had left the country or not; many thought he had not, and we know one clever reporter who had a very painful interview with his editor about one o'clock in the morning.

"So, Mr. X., you are sure the General has not left Paris?"

"Oh, most decidedly. I shook hands with him at his house at four o'clock this afternoon."

"Then we can pass your article and add that fact, so as to reassure the public?"

"Certainly; I will guarantee the exactitude of my information."

"I've no doubt," responded the editor, drily. "Just look over that, will you?"

And he handed the thunderstruck reporter a proof of the General's proclamation, which had just been telephoned from Brussels.

The same morning, this document, in which the General explained the reasons for his departure, appeared in all the newspapers, and was, as may naturally be expected, widely and diversely commented upon. It would be useless to deny that the first impression was very unfavourable towards him; even some of his own partisans loudly expressed their disapproval of the step, announced that he had betrayed his cause, that the whole movement was compromised by this premature flight, that the Committee no longer existed, etc., etc. One minor member of the National Committee even went so far as to resign, having succeeded in persuading himself his presence was so valuable that his departure would be a death-blow to Boulanger and the cause he was sustaining. Far from being stunned by this step, we venture to think that the leaders of the National Party were rather gratified to see with what tender solicitude this member relieved the Committee of his presence, just as the latter was looking about for a decent pretext for getting rid of him. He naturally set up a rival committee; but this was a very lame, impotent affair, and its existence was probably not known to a dozen people outside his own little clique.

However, the public, after the first moment of stupefaction

was over, came to the conclusion that the General had done quite right, justly considering that any one who is the object of a plot or an ambush is bound to avoid the ambush or plot if he can. It was, as usual, a struggle between the Government and one man, and, as usual, the Government came off second best. They wanted to entrap the General, and he declined to be entrapped. There is the real truth of the matter.

As there have been so many versions of this affair published by clever people, who, knowing nothing whatever about it, were obliged to draw on their fertile imaginations for details, we think it will not be uninteresting to give a plain, unvarnished account of the matter from beginning to end, and can fairly claim to be in a position to do this, having made the journey with the General from Paris to Brussels.

For some time previous the question had frequently been discussed as to what should be done in case the General's liberty were threatened in any way. The absurd prosecution of the Patriotic League, undertaken because of the help it had afforded Boulanger during the Paris election, rendered this question very interesting, for every one thought that he would be the next one to be attacked by the Government.

For a long time the General positively refused to take any steps in the matter, saying that he was ready to go to Mazas prison, that he had done nothing against the law, and that even if they did arrest him they would soon be obliged to release him again. But the more prudent members of the Committee were not of this opinion; they had no confidence whatever in the Government's sense of justice, and considered it was his duty to retain his freedom and full liberty of action so as to be able to carry out his programme to its logical conclusion.

"What," said one of them, "would be the use of putting such a trump card in the enemy's hand? What interest would you

serve, how would you direct the movements of your party, did you voluntarily walk into Mazas, and stay there?"

But the General was not to be shaken in his determination, and up to the last moment was resolved to let things take their course. It then became imperative for the Committee to insist on his leaving, the interests at stake being too grave to allow them to bow before what was, after all, a natural decision on the part of a soldier. M. Naquet, the vice-president, and the most influential members of the Committee, addressed a formal letter to the General, in which *they called upon him to take such steps as should leave him, their chief, his full liberty of action.*

This did somewhat convince him, so that he at length promised them to take proper steps to secure his personal freedom of action. However, still hoping he would not be obliged to do so, he added, "But I must be left to choose my own time." The fact is, he did not like the idea of appearing to be running away from people whom he so thoroughly despises.

Fortunately for Boulanger, who has never been betrayed by any one in his *entourage*, he has always been, and is now, certain of knowing everything that is going on in the enemy's camp; and we may say that not a decision is come to, not a plot is laid, but what he is at once informed of it, in time to forestall his unfortunate opponents. It is not therefore surprising that he should have been warned of what the Government intended to do regarding his arrest. With that promptitude which is a part of his nature he quickly made up his mind as to what course he would take. His first thought was to telephone to Count Dillon, at Neuilly.

"Hullo! hullo! is that you, Dillon?"

"No, General; but I will call him."

The Count was quickly at the telephone, and in response to the General's demand whether he could come and see him, he replied,—

"I will be with you in twenty minutes."

When the General and Count Dillon found themselves alone together they were not long in arranging their little plan of campaign. The latter did not hesitate a moment; his first words were,—

"If you decide to go, I'll go with you, of course."

When the departure was definitely decided on, they both returned to their respective occupations. The General resumed his receptions, worked as usual up to seven a'clock, dressed for dinner, drove to a friend's house, dined with him, and changed his clothes. At 9.30 he was at the Gare du Nord in travelling costume with a portmanteau and a dressing case, accompanied by the friend in question, who took his ticket for him, and saw him into the train timed to leave Paris for Brussels at 9.45 p.m.

About five minutes after the General's arrival Count Dillon, the Countess Dillon, and the former's private secretary drove up quietly, took their tickets, and proceeded to their carriage in the same train. Nothing extraordinary happened during the journey; the travellers passed the frontier without the slightest difficulty, and arrived in Brussels at about six o'clock the next morning. Of course, the story about alighting at a small station and passing the frontier in a carriage and pair was an invention due to the fertile brain of some reporter short of copy. The General at once drove to the Hotel Mengelle, whilst Count Dillon and his party went to the Grand Hotel, close to the Bourse.

At mid-day Count Dillon's private secretary was back in Paris again, quietly breakfasting in the ground-floor room at Bignon's, and was greatly amused to hear the various *habitués* discussing the Boulanger affair. Many of them had private information, to the effect that he was still in Paris, at a friend's house, though unfortunately they were not authorized to give the full name and address of this friend. *But he was there.* At midnight the Count's secretary was again in Brussels, just as the famous proclamation

was being telephoned by Count Dillon to Arthur Meyer, the editor of the *Gaulois*, who had kindly undertaken to have it "set up" and communicated to the various morning newspapers.

As an instance of the conscientious way in which the General does his work, we may mention that it took him some twenty minutes to fix on the three adjectives at the end of his manifesto, in which he characterizes the Government of his dreams: "A *habitable*, honest, and free Republic." But, alas! the first newspaper we took up the next morning contained a gross error in that very phrase, which ran as follows: "A *habitual*, honest, and free Republic." Fortunately this was only a local paper, and the error had been committed in re-telephoning the document from Paris to Brussels.

The next day a crowd of reporters, French, English, and Belgian, arrived at the Hotel Mengelle, only to find that the General was at Mons, where he had gone to pay a visit to Rochefort; they were therefore obliged to await his return before they could subject him to the inevitable interview. Amongst them were Mr. Bennett Burleigh, the brilliant war correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, who admirably represented that influential paper, and Mr. Rowland Strong, the young and sympathetic Paris correspondent of the *Morning Post*, who struck us as being destined to attain high rank in this difficult profession, which requires a lightness of touch, a tact, and a talent for distinguishing "news" from *canards*, which is always as valuable as it is rare. They all went to the railway station to meet him; and seeing they were so numerous, the General announced that he would receive them together, make a general statement, and allow each man to serve it up to his readers as he thought best. The reporters therefore followed him to his hotel, and there received a statement of his reasons for his departure from Paris.

Nothing was altered in the general state of affairs; Boulanger

changed nothing in his ordinary mode of life, but rose at the same hour, went through his correspondence with his secretary, received his friends and visitors, and worked as methodically and regularly as if he had been in his study in the Rue Dumont d'Urville. In the evening he dined with Count and Countess Dillon and any members of the Committee who might happen to be in Brussels. Count Dillon had already moved into the Hotel Mengelle, in order to be near his friend; the necessary secretarial talent was transferred from Paris to Brussels: a daily courier was organized between the two cities, and the headquarters of the National party were thus simply transferred from the Rue Dumont d'Urville and Neuilly to the Rue Royale, Brussels.

When we announced to the General that telephonic news had just been received from Paris that the Chamber had voted in favour of his being prosecuted, together with Count Dillon and Rochefort, he took the news very coolly, smiled, and asked the Count whether he preferred the guillotine or a nice stout rope.

As usual, the hotel was jealously watched by police spies from Paris, as well as by a few local *artistes*, who were so well known that the Brussels reporters could have printed their names and addresses in their newspapers had they been so disposed. When the excitement of the first arrival wore off the unfortunate reporters ran somewhat short of news, and began to invent what are known as *canards*. Obliged to furnish "copy," even when there was none to be got, these slaves of the pencil had to invent all sorts of stories to satisfy the public's burning thirst for news. They "manipulated" an interview between Boulanger and Prince Victor, they made Boulanger a sick man in the doctor's hands, they waylaid the proprieter of the hotel to ask him what the great man had had for dinner, and the secretaries to know whether he was going out, was he going to the theatre, had Rochefort called, who had come from Paris, etc., etc.

The General has at least one sincere admirer in England; for one morning a special messenger arrived from London with one of the most superb bouquets he had ever received, and that is saying a great deal. We know the youthful Mercury had no reason to regret his journey, and trust the fair one was equally pleased with the reply she received to her gracious tribute.

Supposing that their stay in Brussels might be prolonged for several months, the two exiles determined to take houses, and chose two in the Avenue Louise, the fashionable thoroughfare leading to the *Bois de la Cambre*, which is, as is well known, the Hyde Park of Brussels. But Boulanger was destined not to enter his house, and Count Dillon had hardly moved into his, before they discovered that their presence in the capital of such a small kingdom placed between two powerful states was likely to cause the Belgian Government some trouble. The situation was all the more delicate, from the fact that the French and German Governments were agreed on the point that it was the duty of the Belgian Cabinet to annoy Boulanger as much as they could during his stay in Brussels.

There being no special advantages about that city, except the telephone, its proximity to Paris, and the fact of French being spoken by all classes, the General and his friends determined to relieve the Belgian Government of all anxiety on their account by going over to London, where they were sure of a hearty welcome, and knew that the Government was strong and independent enough to treat with scorn the remonstrances of France, Germany, or any other nation impertinent enough to make any representation as to Boulanger's presence in the country.

Arrangements were therefore made with the usual promptitude for the journey to London. The South-Eastern Railway kindly placed a special steamer at Boulanger's disposal between Ostend and Dover; and the party, consisting of the General, Count Dillon,

senator Naquet, deputy Turquet, Baron Verly, M. Mouton, the General's secretary, and one or two journalists, embarked on board the *Victoria* on Wednesday, the 24th of April. There was a sympathetic crowd at Brussels railway station to give them a hearty parting cheer, the inevitable photographer focussed the party, and the travellers left the Belgian capital, arriving in due course at Ostend, where the boat was in readiness for them. After a fairly good passage, they arrived at Dover, where they met with a cordial reception, and came on to London by the continental train. Arrangements had been made for clearing the arrival platform at Charing Cross precisely as is done for a member of the royal family. Only a few intimate friends and the representatives of the press were allowed on the platform, and about 5.15 the train steamed into the station. The General was met by several of his friends, and conducted to his carriage, receiving on the way a pretty bouquet from the hands of Master Stuart Cumberland, the son of the well known thought-reader, who had made the General's acquaintance in Paris a few months before.

On the other side of the barriers and outside the station there was a large crowd of people anxious to get a sight of the man about whom they had heard so much; and the General made his way out, amid a volley of cheers mingled with a little groaning, hooting, and whistling indulged in by a group of French deserters, who cannot forgive him for the severity with which he has always treated those who exile themselves in order to escape the military service imposed on every French citizen. Just as the carriage emerged from the station, the streets were suddenly enshrouded in a fog, which cleared up again before they arrived at the hotel. This led Boulanger to say:

"What a strange climate! It seems to get lighter as night comes on!"

The General, Count Dillon, senator Naquet, and deputy Tur-

quet took up their quarters at the Bristol Hotel, which was naturally besieged by visitors of all sorts: friends who had come to make a call of welcome, journalists determined to interview the General, fellow countrymen anxious to pay their respects to the chief of the National Party, and assure him of their sympathy, and, finally, *commissionaires* bringing in bouquets from various unknown sources.

Proceeding in the same manner as at Brussels, the General received the representatives of the press in a body, and gave them the information they required. Strange to say, there was not one amongst them able to interrogate him in fluent French, so that he was obliged to guess the purport of most of their questions. Several of the correspondents remarked in their articles how wonderfully he divined the drift of their meaning, and with what rapidity he framed and gave them a reply.

As usual, the General soon settled down to work, and organized his secretarial staff to meet the requirements of his English correspondence, which increased immediately after his arrival to several hundred letters per day. Invitations, letters of sympathy, offers of services, and letters containing good advice as to how he and his party should conduct themselves in London, poured in from all parts; and the poor postman, who had never had such a client on his round before, made a point of delivering the General's heavy mail before going anywhere else. He will have earned a good Christmas box, and we have no doubt he will get it.

The National Committee was also organized in such a way as to work regularly, and a new President was appointed to take the General's place during his enforced absence. M. Naquet made frequent visits to Paris to keep the chiefs of the party well in touch with the metropolitan and departmental committees, and a service of couriers was organized between Paris and London, so that the preparatory election work went on as well from that city as it

could have done from Paris. If any special question arose, the Deputy or member of the Committee entrusted with the affair came over to London to consult with the General, received his instructions, and then went back by the next boat to execute them. It will thus be seen that the exiles were still "in the movement," and actually had more time to attend to their affairs than if they had remained in Paris, where they were constantly disturbed by all sorts of visitors.

The General was not long before he moved into a house of his own, having taken No. 51, Portland Place, which was, we believe formerly occupied by the late Carl Rosa. His time was spent very much as in Paris: the early morning was devoted to his correspondence, he held receptions three times a week, took a ride in the park with Count Dillon and other friends whenever he could spare the time, and generally dined out in the evening, unless retained by any very important business. A great many people have supposed, because he has not made a great flourish of trumpets every time he dined out, that he has been neglected by London society; this is far from being the case, the General and Count Dillon have many friends in London, and they have all welcomed them in the most cordial way. The General has done the ordinary round of the London season, dined with the Prince of Wales, who would appreciate his qualities as he had not failed to appreciate all that was best in Gambetta, attended various smart parties, made his appearance at the Derby and at Ascot, appeared at a garden party at Marlborough House to meet the Queen and the Shah, assisted at a meet of the Coaching Club, dined at the best clubs, etc., etc.

It must not be forgotten that the General is one of the busiest men in London, and that he is obliged, by his position, to devote the greater part of his time to business connected with the popular cause. He has to study the election reports from the various de-

partments, confer with the future Boulangist candidates—or those who aspire to that honour—receive the various deputations that come from across the Channel, and keep a sharp eye generally on the four corners of France, in view of the supreme struggle which is to take place almost immediately. We once heard a witty deputy say, that the chief of a popular movement like this had to do for his party what stays do for the ladies' figures: moderate the over-robust, sustain the weak, keep the stragglers together, and impart a certain "shape" and "form" to those to whom nature has not been sufficiently lavish.

Altogether, it will be seen that Boulanger has quite enough to do, and has not much time for amusement.

That the whole question excites genuine interest in this country is proved by the number of Boulanger articles, symposiums, etc., which have appeared in the reviews and magazines during the last three months. We think it may be said that the consensus of English opinion is in favour of the General and the cause he is fighting for; and that on the whole our writers have a thorough grasp of what must always be a complicated question to those who have never enjoyed the advantage of seeing the inner workings of French political parties. The fact is, there is a fascination about the subject which tempts all political writers, who are attracted by that element of glorious uncertainty, and that personal flavour which make French politics an exciting and interesting romance, the present chapter thereof being especially interesting, from the fact that the public can see the principal people concerned preparing to descend into the arena.

A great many writers having favoured Londoners and the public generally with their, the writers', opinion about Boulanger, we thought it might be interesting to know what the General thought of London and Londoners, and therefore ventured to broach that interesting question one evening. It would, of course, be almost

impossible to reproduce here the exact words and expressions used by the General in the course of this familiar conversation, but we will endeavour to summarise them as faithfully as possible.

The first thing that struck him was naturally the immense traffic in the streets, the admirable way in which it is managed by our stalwart policemen, the smart appearance of the hansom cabmen, and the splendid cattle used for all our wheeled traffic.

Paris is, of course, crowded in the season; but the block on the Boulevards at the corner of the Rue Montmartre, *le carrefour des écrasés*, is the merest trifle compared with the pandemonium that may be seen in the neighbourhood of the Mansion House, or in Piccadilly, any evening between five and six. Both the General and his friends are in ecstasies with the skill and speed of the drivers of all classes, and compare it favourably with the style generally adopted by the Parisian *cochers*, demons who appear to run pedestrians down with fiendish glee, as if to prove to them the utter folly of walking instead of chartering their ricketty vehicles.

The number and extent of the parks in London have also struck them very forcibly. With the exception of the Parc Monceau, Paris has nothing *within her walls* to compare with Regent's, St. James's, and Hyde Parks, and they are full of admiration for the deliciously green and umbrageous oases which furnish London with those healthy lungs such an immense city so greatly needs.

Naturally Hyde Park, considered as a fashionable promenade, does not strike them in the same way, Paris being, in that respect, quite on a par with London. Has she not the Bois de Boulogne, the *rendezvous* of the wealth, fashion, and beauty of the whole civilized world?

As to London society, there is now-a-days, thanks to club trains and other luxurious links between the two capitals, such a tendency to cosmopolitanism, that national traits are fast disappearing; a man accustomed to good society in Paris or London is equally at home

in both cities, and whether he dine out or at his club is sure to meet with about the same style of people, eat the same dinners, served up in the same way, and hear very much the same conversation. In France, the correct thing is to air one's English ; your continental curled darling talks glibly of a "flirt," by which he means "flirtation," a "five o'clock tea," a "lawn tennis," a "match," etc., etc. ; just as the London swell produces for his friends' benefit all the French he has learned during his frequent visits to Paris, on the Boulevard, in the fashionable restaurants, in the drawing-rooms of the leaders of French fashion, and in the dainty boudoirs of the enchanting *demi-mondaines*, *ondulées*, *dégrafées*, *momentanées*, or *pameuses*, who were one of the greatest attractions about Paris long before the Eiffel Tower was thought of, and who will certainly survive that "great sensation."

The General found in London, as in Paris, that he received a great many more invitations than he could possibly accept, and is loud in his praises of the sumptuous hospitality of the English aristocracy, who have done everything in their power to lighten his exile, and to enable him to leave England with a good impression of his mother's, if not his mother, country.

Of course he has been favourably impressed by the glorious array of aristocratic beauties he has met everywhere, the fairest specimens of accomplished womanhood the world can boast of, numbers of them deserving the compliment passed on them by an admiring amateur, who averred that they possessed all the English beauty with a Parisienne's grace and taste in dress. Indeed, there never was a time when our English ladies dressed with more exquisite taste and knowledge of what suits their special style of beauty, and, judging by the rapid strides made in this direction during the last ten years, it may safely be said that the Parisiennes, who have so long wielded the sceptre of fashion, must now count with their beautiful rivals on this side of the Channel.

One thing, however, which has greatly amused and even astonished the younger Frenchmen is the astounding liberality with which some aristocratic ladies display their *décolletés* charms to the vulgar gaze of whoever can afford threepence for their photograph; they had not the slightest idea of the readiness with which the Lady Clara Vere de Veres were ready to enter into open and feverish competition with the dashing ladies with whom a lavish display of their charms is a part of their business, whether they be dancers, singers, or burlesque beauties. They had fondly imagined that English society ladies would naturally be satisfied with that delightful *rôle*, and leave "professional beauty" to those who are unfortunately obliged to make, not only a "profession," but *a living* of their beauty, on or off the stage, as the case may be.

As to the exceedingly good-natured individuals, lords or otherwise, who chain themselves for life to the dashing Delilahs who have hypnotized them in some "*Faust up to date*" style of piece, this is absolutely beyond their comprehension; the French *viveurs*, even in their wildest dreams of dissipation, draw the line at *marrying* the charming creatures with whom they are perfectly willing to sow their wild oats, spend their leisure time, and even squander their parents' fortunes.

The General has, of course, formed his own opinion about the great Home Rule question; but it is quite natural that he should not care to state it too openly, very properly considering that in his position he ought not to hazard a decided personal opinion respecting a complicated question which has placed the English themselves at such variance.

"When," says he, "all the cleverest political doctors in the country disagree on the point, how can I decide?"

His morning mail daily reminds him that the autograph and photograph hunters are of all countries, and has revealed to him

the fact that England is still the paradise of crochetmongers and searchers after the philosopher's stone, if he may judge from the curious letters he receives about every question under the sun. Did not the General regard his correspondence as absolutely sacred, intended for him alone, we could publish some highly diverting epistles received during his stay on Britain's hospitable shores.

Each applicant for an autograph or a photograph receives a polite reply; indeed, some insatiable mortals frequently ask for both, and even these the General contrives to satisfy.

Every morning before ten o'clock he is well posted up in all that is going on in England and Europe generally; everything in the newspapers worthy of his attention being brought to his notice. He is very pleased with the attitude of the press towards him; even the *Times* and the *Star*, two papers at variance on most points, but wonderfully unanimous in their opposition to him, appear to him to be straightforward, honest, and harmless, though perhaps rather incompetent to judge or appreciate his motives and conduct. Naturally that peculiarly British institution, "Mr. Punch," has not escaped his notice, and he thought that witty gentleman's account of his visit to the Paris Exhibition extremely good and humorous.

On Saturday, July 13th, General Boulanger, accompanied by Count Dillon, Henri Rochefort, and senator Naquet, drove to the Alexandra Palace, where he was met by various deputies from Paris, several deputations, and a crowd of enthusiastic partisans, who cheered him to the echo as he passed through the various parts of the building. At seven o'clock a banquet was held, presided over by the General, to celebrate the centenary of the French Revolution. It was attended by about 1,200 ladies and gentlemen, chiefly French, including sixty delegates from various revisionist committees in all parts of France. After dinner, there were of course the usual speeches, amongst the orators being MM.

Rochefort, Naquet, Roche, Bonfils, Hector France, and Laisant. After these gentlemen had finished, the General delivered a short speech, in which, after referring to the political situation in France, he dwelt on the hospitality he and his friends had received in England, and wound up by proposing in graceful terms the health of the Queen, which was enthusiastically responded to by the assembled Frenchmen, who cried, "*Vive la Reine! Vive l'hospitalité anglaise!*" with as much fervour as they had just previously acclaimed the General.

The company then adjourned to the terrace, and watched the fireworks, after which a special train conveyed the General and his friends to King's Cross, Boulangist songs being sung by the French passengers, and cheered by the English excursionists all along the line. At eleven o'clock the train steamed into King's Cross, and thus ended a *fête* which had afforded the French residents in London a pleasant opportunity of expressing their approval of what the General is trying to do for them and their friends in their own country.

It would be idle to suppose that any man could possibly be happy anywhere during a *forced* visit; but the General is emphatic in declaring that, were he again obliged to choose a resting place amongst the European capitals other than Paris, he would certainly select London, where there is an intellectual movement, scientific, literary, artistic, and dramatic, which one does not find in any other capital.

Altogether he is wonderfully pleased with a stay which has enabled him to become closely and personally acquainted with the character and institutions of a great nation, with which his own country has so many reasons for remaining friendly. Should an occasion present itself later on, we are sure he would be delighted to come over to England again as a *visitor*, when not only the aristocracy and the people, but the Government and the powers

that be would be happy to welcome a man who has strong sympathies towards this country, sympathies which will certainly be of lasting practical utility should events in France maintain that exceedingly favourable tendency towards the General that they now show.

During his stay in London the French Government has done its best to stifle political discussion in that country, and to prevent the Boulangists from holding their meetings and talking over matters with their partisans.

At Angoulême, MM. Laisant, Laguerre, and Déroulède, who had gone to that town for the purpose of holding a meeting, were summarily arrested by the Commissary of police, who insisted on marching them off to prison, although quite unable to tell them why they were thus arrested nor with what they were charged.

But the "prisoners" soon found out why they were thus cast into a dungeon, the Minister of the Interior had given orders to that effect; so that the arrest of the two Deputies and Paul Déroulède turned out to be an arbitrary, illegal, administrative measure, rather than the result of a breach of the law. Naturally, a question was asked about this affair in the Chamber of Deputies, but the Opportunist majority deferred the discussion for a month. As usual, this step made matters worse for the Government, for the day the discussion came on Laguerre himself was present in the Chamber, and made a speech which lashed the Opportunists into a fury, making them positively writhe with impotent rage. The President of the Chamber, a weak, senile nonentity, no more capable of acting as president of such an assembly than of commanding a man-of-war, went through the farce of excluding Laguerre from the Chamber; but the young Deputy refused to move from the tribune, pronouncing his exclusion from the Chamber to be just as illegal as his imprisonment at Angoulême. The weak-witted President adjourned the sitting; but when it was resumed Laguerre

was still to be found in the tribune, and M. Méline was literally at his wit's end. He again "invited" M. Laguerre to descend from the tribune and expel himself from the Chamber; but the artful deputy, disregarding this amiable invitation, refused to do anything of the sort, pronounced the whole proceeding to be illegal, and boldly announced that he was there by the will of his constituents, and would only allow himself to be removed by force. The President, now positively beside himself with rage, afraid to use force, knew not what to do; so in despair he put on the famous hat, by which he acknowledged that he was powerless to maintain order, and the sitting was thus brought to a close, leaving Laguerre master of the situation, and the Government, in the person of the President, reduced to play a pitiful *rôle*, hardly likely to increase its *prestige* in the eyes of the country.

During this time the proceedings in the Senate, transformed into a sort of parody of a High Court of Justice, dragged on their weary course. Witnesses were examined, documents seized and read; now and again the Government organs announced that the High Court was *on the point* of finding something very damaging to General Boulanger, something likely to prove him to be guilty of all the most abominable crimes, from petty larceny to high treason. But with a prudence which appeared to the public somewhat excessive on the part of people so sure of their facts, the High Court mummers refrained from publishing these famous incriminatory documents, so that people gradually came to the conclusion that they only existed in the heated imaginations of the misguided individuals who had undertaken Jules Ferry's dirty work.

These miserable minions of a still more miserable man were really to be pitied when they began to examine their witnesses, who generally gave answers directly opposite to what they hoped and expected, disproved their "facts," and told them plainly that

they had been bamboozled by German spies in the joint pay of MM. Bismarck and Ferry.

The fact is, the unfortunate statesmen who had invented this latest dodge for annihilating the General were pursued at every step by that demon of ill-luck who has been tracking them for years, and have been obliged tacitly to admit that their High Court was a farce, their accusations false, and all their researches against the General fruitless. As Count Dillon remarked one day, they are positively amusing in their stupidity. They have attacked three men who are not exactly young, men who might perhaps, after an agitated life, have had certain things to conceal. Boulanger has been a Cabinet Minister: they are well aware, by what they have done themselves, what chances he had for peculation; Rochefort was mixed up with the Commune; Count Dillon has been engaged in several vast commercial enterprises. Notwithstanding the seizure of papers, the breaking into houses, and the spies they have employed, these precious imitation Star Chamber men have not found any compromising fact or document worth a moment's attention from serious, honest people. The Count thinks that it is not so much Rochefort and himself that they wish to attain; all they want is to disgrace Boulanger in the eyes of the community. But he, the Count, has sworn by all he holds sacred that there is no honester man than the General. "There is nothing whatever against him, nothing whatever to fear from this High Court!"

But if the Ministers have found nothing against Boulanger and his friends, certain independent people have found a great many clear proofs of the Ministers' disgraceful acts. Every day has brought some fresh proof of peculation, fraud, and jobbery on the part of these virtuous, austere Republicans, who have set up an exceptional tribunal to try honest people.

The ball was opened by the Opportunists accusing Arthur

Meyer, the editor of the *Gaulois*, of being hand in hand with Jacques Meyer, a defaulting stockbroker, who had fled to Brussels, and of endeavouring to make a political use of this defaulter in Boulanger's interest. The eternal stupidity of this unfortunate Government was destined to receive another striking illustration; for, notwithstanding the letters they caused to be written, the articles they had inserted in their newspapers, Arthur Meyer was not only able to clear himself, but to turn the tables on them. He had no difficulty in proving that his connexion with his namesake was a purely disinterested and even charitable affair, and announced that he was prepared to furnish proofs that Thevenet, the Minister of Justice, was an accomplice and a partner with Meyer, and that he had framed his official policy to suit his Stock Exchange operations. This was a crushing blow both for the Minister and the Ministry, and one that any innocent man could have averted by prosecuting his accuser, and throwing full light on his own transactions. But Arthur Meyer defied Thevenet to do this, and the latter has not dared to stir; so that the public has the satisfaction of knowing that the scales of Justice are held by the bosom friend of a defaulting stockbroker. As often happens, one exposure led to another, and some people at Lyons have asserted that Thevenet had been mixed up with other financial scandals in that city, and been convicted by the tribunals. His own supporters have openly expressed their disgust, and the *Lanterne*, the least squeamish of papers, has violently attacked the Minister, calling upon him to clear himself from these charges, or to relieve the Cabinet of his presence.

The above is one specimen of the Ministers entrusted with the task of governing France. We will now refer to another, M. Constans, the Minister of the Interior.

This worthy statesman, during his term of office as Governor of Tonquin and Cochin China, had looked upon these countries

as places to make his "pile," no matter how, and get back as soon as possible. Henri Rochefort, who had long been acquainted with this gentleman's antecedents, determined to let the public know the character of the principal member of the Cabinet, and for this purpose he had no need to waste his time in inventing vague charges unsupported by facts.

He had only to publish in his paper an official telegram from M. Richaud, Constans' successor, to the Colonial Minister. This document constituted a formal condemnation of Constans' policy, and a denunciation of his peculations on all occasions. The Government could not deny its authenticity, for it had previously been referred to in the Chamber of Deputies in a discussion during which the Minister had formally refused to produce the telegram, and for reasons which our readers can readily understand.

But this telegram was merely a summary of the full report which was published by Rochefort a day or two later in the shape of a long official despatch, confirming the telegram. This act of accusation made *in extremis* (M. Richaud died in the Red Sea on his way home) by an honest man against one who sacrificed to his greedy proclivities the fortune of the country, the life of the French soldiers, and the honour of the French name, made all honest Frenchmen shudder with horror and disgust.

This report, crushing for Constans and for the Government of which he formed part, caused great excitement in the parliamentary world, and, indeed, throughout the country. Not a ministerial journal dared to say a word about it, thus recognising the impossibility of defending the culprit or even pleading extenuating circumstances in his favour.

Written by a Republican official, a man of rare energy and honesty, who knew that he was exposing himself to the deadly hatred of an implacable, powerful foe, this document bears all the imprints of truth, and is one of the most damning impeachments

formulated against any public man. It proved in the clearest manner:

1. That Constans, by his intrigues and promises to the French colonists in the country, had obtained their goodwill, and neglected to settle those questions which might have endangered his personal popularity. After having gone through the country smoothing his way everywhere by specious promises, he left for Europe, leaving to his successor the difficult and disagreeable task of satisfying the numbers who had believed in his promises.

2. That Constans was surrounded by shady speculators and financiers, who could do nothing but harm to any upright, honest governor. That he inspired, if he did not actually write, a series of articles which appeared in the Paris *Voltaire*, and were afterwards sent out to the colony, where they served to stir up strife between the civil and military authorities, Constans being annoyed by the presence of the military, which prevented him putting his speculating plans into execution.

3. That Constans authorized the re-establishment of a gambling scheme, called the "Game of the Thirty-six Beasts," which by its mechanism is equivalent to a veritable organized robbery. This permission had been refused by previous governors, but Constans authorized it in consideration of rich presents, which excited the utmost astonishment and even indignation in the minds of all honest people in the colony. The coincidence of the presentation to Constans by king Norodom of a belt which was worth a million of francs with the re-establishment of this game gave rise to comments which greatly reflected on Constans' reputation.

Presents of this value could not be classed in the category of usual presents always exchanged in the East. Not only that, in an Eastern country where venality is the order of the day, and where all functionaries are exposed to this dangerous temptation, the example set by the grand chief was very demoralizing.

We need not mention the other charges of jobbery preferred against Constans during his stay in the far East; we think the above specimens will amply prove that he is hardly the sort of man who should be entrusted with the delicate functions devolving on a Minister of the Interior, who has control of a secret service fund, and is daily exposed to temptations of bribery in all directions.

The above are two brilliant specimens of the Ministers chosen by M. Sadi Carnot to help him to govern the country. Impartial individuals would say he was mad to choose them, and criminal to keep them now that he knows what they are. They point to the fate of M. Grévy, who, though not exactly a swindler himself, was included in the execration showered on Daniel Wilson, it being rightly considered that his first duty was to put a stop to his son-in-law's disgraceful proceedings. He held out for some time, but the day of reckoning came at last. This fact is well worthy of M. Carnot's attention, for he is in very much the same position, the only difference being that, instead of one Wilson, he is tacitly encouraging half a dozen or more.

Though there was nothing very striking about the indictment drawn up against the General and his friends by the minions of the law, we will give a summary of the document, merely as an historical curiosity. M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire, the Procurator-General, is a literary man as well as a lawyer, and a perusal of his concoction leads to the conviction that he paid more attention to dramatic effect than to strict facts and the rigorous logic of his case. Probably labouring under the delusion that he was preparing "copy" for his publishers, he has strung together, *à la Gaboriau*, what he professes to consider the principal points of Boulanger's career, from the date of his nomination to the rank of General of Division and to the command of the forces in Tunis, in February, 1884, down to his doings on the famous "historical night," when he and

his adherents were alleged to be planning a march on the Elysée. The Procurator-General has made a great point of the *pots de vin* or bribes, which the General has "touched" from time to time; but it would of course be a very difficult thing for him to bring forward any proofs of his assertions.

In Tunis the General is said to have maintained a staff of "agents" of both sexes. Requiring money, the General, through his journalistic "agent," is said to have "tried" to obtain a large commission on contracts for the supply of coffee and shoulder-knots to the troops. The Procurator-General then goes on to say that the General when Minister of War had ordered some of the portraits of himself—which he distributed far and wide—from hostile Germany. In the "reserve fund" of the War Office the General dipped deeply. He gave £5,600 to the new military club, but the remainder of the money drawn by him from that fund was spent, according to the Senate's "devil," in paying his debts, starting commercial ventures, and furnishing two suites of rooms in Paris. When he had to leave the War Office the General is accused by the Procurator-General of having furthermore taken £1,200.

Having attributed several other doings of a similar character to the defendant, M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire, disdaining to furnish anything like proofs of his assertions, proceeds to the "conspiracy charge," in which he also incriminates Count Dillon and Rochefort. Naturally he does not deal very tenderly with the career and antecedents of Count Dillon, and he describes Rochefort as a professional libeller and agitator. These gentlemen are accused of aiding and abetting the General in his doings—notably in the matter of the departure of the ex-Minister of War from Paris, in that of his conduct at Clermont-Ferrand, and in everything done by his followers in Paris afterwards. In leaving the Lyons station for Clermont-Ferrand, General Boulanger is accused

of encouraging the mob, whilst his emissaries did the same thing in Paris itself. Count Dillon regulated all the correspondence by cipher, and Rochefort sent several of his friends to act as the General's "agents" at Clermont-Ferrand. The legal novelist then referred to the clandestine visits of the General to Paris, and his connexion with the presidential crisis. Coming to the finances of the principal defendant, the Procurator-General says that, according to the particulars furnished by the Post Office, the General received numerous money orders and cheques from various parts of France, fourteen from Italy, three from Austria, and one from Germany.

Finally, M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire accuses the General of trying to seduce soldiers from their allegiance, asking them, through his "agents," not to fire on his followers when they began their revolution, and of offering bribes to a high police functionary and Government officials. Such is a summary of this ridiculous document, and it is not surprising that the entire French Press and most steady-going Republicans, who have never felt any sympathy for General Boulanger, should find M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire's indictment vague, illusive, and completely unsatisfactory. Not one definite proof of guilt is brought forward against any of the defendants, and the whole case against the General and his friends would probably end in smoke if it were tried before a legal court, instead of a collection of French senators in their dotage.

Naturally, though Boulanger answered the High Court, he can afford to snap his fingers at it, for the more it attacks him the greater will be the sympathy he will enlist. He is accused of an "attempt against the security of the State," but he fails to comprehend the charge. The General certainly thinks that the State is in a bad way and wants a new constitution; but the State itself, with a few exceptions, is of the same opinion. "Corruption!" General Boulanger defies the High Court to bring forward

a single officer or soldier whom he has tried to suborn. He knows the army too well to have striven to compromise it. "Conspiracy!" This is the height of absurdity. He was legally elected to seats in Parliament, and he accepted them in the open light of day. He was escorted to the Gare de Lyon; he was applauded at the Longchamps review; and, like all good Frenchmen, he wished M. Grévy to be replaced by a President who would not facilitate the operations of a compromising son-in-law. If this be a plot, then electors all over the country must be prosecuted as co-conspirators.

What disgusts the General most of all is the accusation that he appropriated nearly £10,000 when he was at the War Office; but of course the High Court cannot possibly represent him as a *tripoteur*, as he can easily prove that he never saw a *sou* of the "Secret Service Fund." The money was always paid out by his *chef de cabinet*, and he is ready to swear that he never even touched the key of the strong box. He saved money in some of the official departments, in order that he might spend more on the frontier or in Germany. Besides, when a Minister resigns, he hands over his accounts to his successor, with a full explanation as to the manner in which the "secret service" money has been employed. At the end of each year the Ministers in office submit their accounts to the President of the Republic. No Minister ever used the "Secret Service Fund" with more prudence or economy than he did; his colleague at the Quai d'Orsay well knows how he used it, especially in connexion with the Schnæbelé incident, as he supplied him with all the information he required.

The story that he gave £4,000 to M. Henri Rochefort is a stupid invention, every one being aware that the witty editor of the *Intransigeant* spent £1,200 in extra copies for distribution at the election in the Department of the Nord, and that he received no pecuniary compensation whatever. He was amply satisfied with

the pleasure of seeing the triumph of the cause he has so valorously sustained, day by day, in a series of articles which have been a source of delight and amusement to thousands of readers, whilst at the same time rendering a service to the country by the exposure of those who still cling to office.

Besides, a man who earns twelve thousand a year by his pen can well afford to indulge in such a luxury as working in politics for nothing, and leave his less fortunate *confrères* to dance attendance on the Government faction, the real and only distributers of secret service money.

Having given a summary of Lucie Beaurepaire's concoction, we are bound, in common fairness, to publish the answer vouchsafed by those whom he attacked with such violence. As the document is very short, we will publish it *in extenso.*

"DEAR FELLOW COUNTRYMEN,—

"We disdained to reply to the absurd libels trumped up against us by Ministers convicted of embezzlement and by a dishonoured Public Prosecutor. We did not wish to appear to accept a *rôle* in the hateful comedy that has been played for several months. Our abstention is now fully justified, as the very facts themselves have undertaken our defence. The High Court and the Government endeavoured, first of all, to screw from honourable officers of our Army lying denunciations of their former chief. Repelled with indignation in that quarter, the suborners of witnesses did not scruple to turn to criminals, whom they sought even in the cells of Mazas, in order to obtain from them the false evidence of which they stood in need. It is, by their own confession, with the money of the taxpayers that they have bought this testimony, and it is these wretched prevaricators who accuse the late Minister of War of having squandered the money of the State. The disgust of the public has already condemned these

malefactors, who will ere long be overtaken by the justice of the country, as they have rendered themselves amenable to the penal code; but it is now demonstrated by their infamous machinations that they have utterly failed to discover anything against us, for if they had had in their hands the slightest proof of any value, they would not thus have risked being brought before an assize court by going into prisons to negotiate with forgers. It is you, dear fellow countrymen, whom we constitute judges between us and these thieves. We await with confidence the verdict which you will soon pronounce, and from which the bandits, who feel that it is approaching, strive in vain to escape. *Vive la France régénérée! Vive la République honnête!*

(Signed) GENERAL BOULANGER.
ARTHUR DILLON.
HENRI ROCHEFORT."

"LONDON,
"*July 20th*, 1889.

About this time thirty *employés* at the Ministry of the Interior were dismissed summarily from their posts, accused of having a leaning towards the "Boulangist movement." This was understood to be merely the first among a series of holocausts which were to be made of officials in every other department of the Civil Service, and was really a case of killing two birds with one stone. There had been an outcry that the Government offices were too heavily manned, and as economy is the order of the day, some saving was effected; then, from time to time, the Government had been exhorted to turn out of the Ministries the officials who were suspected of a half-hearted loyalty to the existing *régime*. This was too good an opportunity to be missed, and General Boulanger proved equal to the occasion. Through the medium of M. Henri Rochefort he announced that he would not allow the

victims to be inconvenienced in any way, and that, from the date of their dismissal until the elections came off, the salaries of all the *employés* whose dismissal is gazetted in the *Official Journal* would be paid to them regularly by the Committee of the National Party, without their even taking the trouble to apply for the money. Moreover, the Boulangists intend to bring forward as candidates at the general elections the chief functionaries whose abilities have been put to the proof, and if, as they hope, they emerge successfully from the conflict, all—down to the humblest *employé*—will be provided with suitable posts. "The confidence which they have reposed in us will not be betrayed," adds M. Henri Rochefort; "General Boulanger will not abandon them. The Government may continue its 'executions,' but those whom it may kill will never have been in better health." This is a clear, practical proof of the solicitude which General Boulanger has always evinced for those whom, in a memorable address, he described as the "lowly and the weak."

In the early part of July the General announced his intention to stand for eighty cantons at the elections for the Councils-General, which were to take place on the 28th of that month. He fully intended to confine his candidature to these eighty cantons; but, unfortunately for his interests, some of his friends were over-zealous, and, instead of keeping strictly to the number of cantons prescribed, they extended operations to over 400, and selected the districts without the slightest discrimination. We know a certain deputy who, when he returned to London after the campaign, was treated to a little speech which made him sit up. However, there was no time for recriminations, Boulanger had something better to do, and the matter was soon allowed to drop; for, after all, the campaign had yielded the results he expected. His object was to organize a partial mobilization of his electoral forces, to see how his battalions worked in action, and he had every reason to be

satisfied with the experiment. If the total success, from a political standpoint, was not such as might have been expected, the blame did not lie with universal suffrage; local rivalries, petty village ambitions, paltry personalities, which sweep everything aside when they are once set in motion, had alone done the mischief, if, indeed, mischief is not a big word for an affair of such slight importance. Naturally the Government and the Opportunists were in high glee; for the thousandth time they adopted their usual stupid tactics, in spite of the many bitter lessons experience has taught them. They cried out that Boulanger was annihilated, that he had committed suicide, that Boulangism was a thing of the past, and that they were thus left in peace to carry on "the same old game."

But, strange to say, though Boulanger was dead, morally and physically, they nevertheless continued to employ M. Beaurepaire in the High Court. The Senate was turned into a secret Tribunal, to judge the General, Count Dillon, and Henri Rochefort, and the proceedings were hurried through with disgraceful haste. No witnesses were called, so that the Senators, the Government, and Lucie Herpin Beaurepaire had it all their own way. After having prolonged their lugubrious farce for a few days, the unfortunate Senators declared themselves ready to pronounce their verdict.

Notwithstanding the secrecy the High Court announced its intention to observe, Boulanger had no difficulty in obtaining a complete account of the proceedings, and portions of the same also appeared in the *Cacarde*. M. Mermeix, the editor of this paper, was seized and imprisoned for this offence, of which he was far from being guilty; but though the Government kept him in durance vile for some time, they were obliged to release him after all, the absurdity of the charge having been clearly demonstrated. As usual, the members of the Cabinet were obliged to

devour a leek large enough to choke a thousand Taffys, and Mermeix could congratulate himself on being sure of his election, thanks to the "friendly lead" given him by the Government. As is well known, any man who has been imprisoned for a political offence can depend on the people voting straight as an arrow for him as soon as they can get the opportunity.

Having obtained this copy of the proceedings, Boulanger was enabled to reply to all the charges (which were substantially those contained in the indictment, of which we have given a summary on pages 233–236) before they were publicly preferred. So that when Beaurepaire summed up, the case had already been disposed of by public opinion, the only fair Tribunal in a trial of this kind. In order to preclude any suspicion of partiality, we will quote the opinion of the Paris correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, a well-informed, independent, and impartial authority, who says:

"Everybody is discussing the 'Reply' which General Boulanger has just issued to the indictment of the Public Prosecutor; and I am bound to say that the prevailing opinion is, that the author of this manifesto—for it is addressed 'To the People, my only Judge!'—has not merely made a very able defence, but has succeeded in turning the tables on his opponents. In this highly interesting document the General answers point by point the principal charges brought against him. He is fully justified in congratulating himself on the lucky chance which placed in his possession the evidence given to the Examining Committee of the High Court, and which, as he triumphantly remarks, has upset all the plans of M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire; for it is one thing to make accusations, and another thing to explain the sources whence they were derived.

"Owing to the side-lights thus thrown on the proceedings of his adversaries, General Boulanger, although placed at a considerable

disadvantage, has been able to state his case with remarkable precision. Your readers are already acquainted with the chief features of an indictment which grievously disappointed many of the best friends of the Government, who searched it in vain for 'some new thing,' some fresh and startling 'revelation.'

"In his answer, General Boulanger tells the Public Prosecutor flatly that most of his accusations are based on a tissue of falsehoods. The charges as to his attempts to make capital out of his position in Tunis repose almost entirely on the evidence of a man who has been in gaol and got nearly £300 for his trouble. Then the writer is very merry over the story that when he was Minister of War he had forty-four portraits of himself prepared. He thought that many more had been disposed of, but he declares that he had nothing to do with all this. Similarly, he denies that he ever subsidised any newspapers while he was in office. The General points out a serious error which crept into the indictment. In 1886 he had 740,000*f.* of 'Secret Service' money and not 700,000*f.*; but in the three previous years the sums allowed to his predecessors were greater.

"As for the 'Reserve Fund,' nearly the whole of it was used in 1874 and 1875, when France was menaced with war, and although it increased rapidly soon afterwards, it underwent various fluctuations. What money General Boulanger spent while he was in the Rue Saint-Dominique was devoted to matters connected with the 'Schnæbelé incident.' Indeed, the General declares that all the officers who worked with him in the spring of 1887 will have arrived at the conclusion that comparatively very little money was expended at that date, for never was France nearer a war. General Boulanger goes on to make a very important statement. He relates how the military attaché of a great power had organized a vast system of espionage, which baffled all the efforts of the French officials. With a great deal of pains he succeeded

in discovering the spot in which the military attaché concealed his papers, and one night they were taken away. For several hours General Boulanger and his subordinates had in their hands lists of spies and copies of the reports sent by the officer to his Government. All these were copied in hot haste, and when he awoke on the morrow the military attaché found all his papers in their place. He never knew how the War Office had been able to procure various 'revelations.'

"Later on General Boulanger got the bill relating to spies voted, and he adds, with pardonable pride, that M. de Freycinet and M. Flourens—his colleagues in former Cabinets—could tell how often he supplied them with important information connected with their Department of Foreign Affairs. Afterwards, and when all danger was averted, economy was the rule. The General says, by the way, that when he founded the Military Club he sent an official to London to study the organization of the Army and Navy Club, and he reminds us that the rules which he initiated are still in vogue.

"As for the reproach made against him of having paid his father's debts, he asks what would have been said of him if he had not done so after having held for four years the most remunerative posts in the Army. The General explains, by the way, that when he was leaving the War Office he paid 2,000*f.* out of his own pocket to settle an account, rather than ask his successor to do so for him. His relations with General Ferron were such that he preferred to pay the money and let the matter drop. With regard to another criticism, he says that it is not true that he had two *appartements* furnished in Paris, and asks where they were. General Boulanger declares that he was very anxious to give a strict account of the use which he had made of the 'Secret Service' money to M. Jules Grévy, but that his successor, General Ferron, told him that such a step was unnecessary.

"As for the alleged 'conspiracy,' it is true that after his retirement from the War Office he saw daily a certain number of politicians; but they were M. Clémenceau and other Radicals. If they were engaged in a 'plot,' why are these gentlemen at large? On July 14th, 1887, he is said to have been in Paris, awaiting events. Far from this, he was ill in bed at Clermont-Ferrand. Much has been made out of the famous 'historical night'; but this is too absurd, nor can it be proved that the General ever went to Prangins to see Prince Napoléon. 'Where does the money come from?' is a question often asked. 'You have answered it yourself, for you say that in less than a year I received 1,275 registered letters.'

"In conclusion, General Boulanger says that his adversaries who are sitting in judgment on him will condemn him, but that they are already condemned by public opinion. He is accused of an 'attempt against the security of the State'; but he repeats that the 'voting ticket' is the only arm that can henceforth be used, and that he appeals to universal suffrage. 'I appeal from the iniquity of the Parliamentarians to the justice of the people!' are the last words of this frank and straightforward manifesto."

When the Senate, in solemn conclave, pronounced their sentence on the three exiles, "*detention for life in a fortified place*," it was naturally received all over Europe with an immense and joyous burst of laughter, the first to enjoy the fun being the victims themselves. We have not noticed any change in the appearance or spirits of the condemned men since this comic verdict, which may probably be applied to some of the Senators and their Ministerial backers before it attains those against whom it was pronounced. For it is very certain that a day will come when Justice, with her limping but sure step, will overtake the shady individuals who are now awaiting in different Ministries their turn for a passage to that favourite watering-place, Nouméa-on-the-Sea.

There the interesting Thevenet will be able to relate the birth of his passion for *la belle Rosalie* to Constans, who may, in return, explain to the late Minister of Justice how to play the game of the thirty-six beasts.

Like every Government which feels itself at its last gasp, the Opportunists are dismissing wholesale the civil and military functionaries who are suspected, rightly or wrongly, of being more or less sympathetic to the "coming Man." M. de Freycinet, the Minister of War, with that prudence for which he has always been famous, had taken a holiday, probably to avoid being obliged to execute such dirty work in his department. But he was peremptorily called back, and forced to cashier a number of officers accused of being friendly to Boulanger. When a man's desire to retain office leads him to such lengths, we are authorized in extending to him a certain amount of indulgent pity.

CHAPTER XIV.

PREPARING FOR THE STRUGGLE.

STRICTLY speaking, the electoral period was opened last January, when the magnificent victory gained by the General in Paris convinced the Ministers that the capital was marching hand in hand with the provinces, and recognised the urgent need for a change of Government. The Ministry opened fire by its absurd prosecution of the Patriotic League, a proceeding which merely rendered that body more powerful than ever all over the country. Could a census be taken, we think it would be found that there are more Leaguers now than before the Paris election. Thus, the Government, by its ill-advised action, has virtually given a new lease of life to an institution which it has technically suppressed. That was certainly not what they hoped and intended to do, but such is the practical result of their blundering tactics.

The departure of the General from Paris was another measure on which they fully reckoned to consummate his discomfiture and that of his party; but they will soon learn that absent people are not always in the wrong, whatever the proverb may say to the contrary. Judging from the marks of sympathy received by the exile during his stay in England, we should think that those who supported him before now support him the more, and that many now stand by him who never troubled about

him before. To exile a popular man, and make an interesting martyr of him, is not the best method of annihilating him, and French history is full of the most conclusive proofs of the absurdity of such a proceeding on the part of any Government. Yesterday's martyrs have an awkward way of developing into to-morrow's heroes, and this ought to have made the ministerial Opportunists hesitate before putting this clumsy machinery into motion. But, like the Bourbons, they decline to learn anything, and plunge into the wildest schemes that political passion, private hatred, and childish fear can suggest. Any one but a pure Opportunist would have seen that the General was much more harmless in Paris than in London.

But the crowning blunder was his prosecution before a collection of senile Senators, who had condemned and sentenced him and his friends long before the trial came on. Lucie Beaurepaire, the farce in the Senate, the flood of lies invented by the Government, the mock trial, and the comic verdict, all these things have so disgusted the majority of Frenchmen, that even those who cared nothing about Boulanger and his friends now look upon them with a certain amount of sympathy, whilst they cannot help regarding Lucie Beaurepaire, Burat & Co. as a disgrace to the nation, a collection of dishonest mountebanks who have parodied justice and made France a laughing-stock throughout Europe. No one can have any consideration for a nation which allows itself to be governed by such a gang of funereal clowns, who would not command a guinea a week in any well-regulated circus.

In order to leave no stone unturned to render themselves completely ridiculous, hopelessly unpopular, they have, as we have seen, inaugurated a sort of official reign of terror in civil and military circles, by dismissing any public servant or officer suspected of the slightest sympathy for Boulanger or the cause

he is fighting for. Naturally each dismissal creates a wave of sympathy for the victims and, indirectly, for Boulanger, which cannot fail to manifest itself during the elections.

As to the famous trick of changing the mode of carrying out the elections, and their parliamentary dodge for preventing Boulanger standing for more than one constituency, we will offer no opinion about that ourselves, but will merely quote the warning words of an organ which has always manfully supported the Government through thick and thin.

"*This special legislation may result in the discomfiture of the shining lights of the Republican party, and oblige the President of the Republic to have recourse to fresh men for the formation of the new Cabinet. It is very probable that in consequence of unexpected, unforeseen coalitions, those who have hitherto been considered the leaders of the Republican party will be left out in the cold during the coming struggle. This would not be the first time that a law passed by a party in power as a supreme resource has proved fatal to its authors, who had looked upon it as their only guarantee of political salvation. We do not wish to play the part of Cassandra in this affair, but we feel bound to warn our friends that history is full of examples of these fatal, irretrievable errors in political tactics.*"

Such is the lively way in which the Government's dearest friends sustain the courage of those who are just about to engage in their life-struggle with united and determined enemies. We much doubt whether Job, in all his troubles, ever had such blessed comforters as these.

This is the way in which the Government has opened the electoral campaign, and we presume that these are their tip-top tactics, for we see no signs of any others. It is true they have invited the mayors to a monster banquet in Paris, and thus given them an opportunity, at the taxpayers' expense, of climbing the

Eiffel Tower, and renewing their acquaintance with the blushing beauties of the boulevards; but any one who knows the provincial mayor is aware that he is quite capable of accepting all the Government likes to offer him, and then returning to his native heath fully determined to act as he pleases in matters political. The Ministers must really be of the most verdant candour to suppose that a hot dinner and a bow from the mechanical Carnot would blind these wily denizens of the provinces to the fact that the present Government is doomed, and that the coming men are the ones who are most likely to be in a position to prove useful to any ambitious mayors who are looking out for the Legion of Honour or the "Leek," as the order of *Mérite Agricole* is somewhat irreverently styled by facetious Parisians. The mayors having this idea firmly rooted in their minds, it is not difficult to see what will be their attitude during the coming elections.

Another important feature of the struggle is the touching unanimity with which these fraternal Republicans have agreed to disagree; they are already in a delightful bowie-knife, tomahawk frame of mind about precedence, candidates, programme, and general tactics.

Joseph Reinach, who has, up to the present time, been the high priest of that Opportunism of which Jules Ferry is the prophet, has formally announced, in a political address, that he is not an Opportunist. This declaration, coming from the man who has for years acted as editor of the *République Française*, the principal Opportunist organ, is a striking proof of the popularity of that party, and the confidence it now inspires in the minds of those who have hitherto been its most sturdy supporters.

Ferry is dead against Clémenceau; Goblet has openly attacked both these worthies; Freycinet, faithful to his political record, which has always been written on sand, is thinking of throwing up

the Opportunists altogether and boldly joining the Boulangists; whilst that noble trio, Thevenet, Rouvier, and Constans, are already asking themselves whether some honest successor of Lucie Beaurepaire is not already preparing their *dossiers*, with a view of investigating several shady affairs in their chequered careers.

As to M. Sadi Carnot, we may imagine that he will wait for some one to wind him up, pull the string, and point out what he is to do. For, strange to say, the French people cannot get it out of their heads that the sable, funereal Sadi is a tin figure, wound up for a given time to perform certain functions: "*You puts a penny in you pulls a string, and the figger will work.*" All the newspapers the comic journals, and every caricature have always represented him in that light; and the idea is so deeply rooted in the popular mind that there it will now remain, even should a miracle be worked, and the young and interesting Carnot show signs of life, and a desire to give proofs of a separate, independent existence.

Under these circumstances, he is really *une quantité négligeable* and would probably bow to the right after the elections with the same mechanical, metallic grace he displayed in bowing to the left before that great event.

Thus it will be seen that the Government, whilst flattering themselves they are acting with extraordinary energy and machiavelian astuteness, are in reality doing their adversaries a vast deal of good, and, in fact, performing half their work. Boulanger may therefore confidently reckon on the Ministers, who will do all in their power to assist him. He is also sure of the benevolent neutrality of a President who cannot stir an inch, for the simple reason that the said Ministers will be too busy looking after their private affairs to think of winding up his works and pulling the magic string.

As to Boulanger and his party, things are in a very different state. His Committees have long been organized in every depart-

ment in France; he has men in every *circonscription*, who are ready to stand with a clear, definite programme; and the various forces marching under his flag are fully agreed on all points. Boulangist Republicans, Buonapartists, Royalists, and numbers of independent Republicans are ready to go forward as one man to the cry of *Vive Boulanger! Vive la Révision!* and they form such a compact, united mass, that we can hardly see how they can be resisted.

Deputies and future Deputies are continually flitting between Paris and London, and couriers are constantly on the road between the two cities. Amongst these is M. Lamouroux, a handsome, strapping, determined fellow, who would not hesitate to make his breakfast off his documents rather than allow them to fall into the hands of the enemy; in fact, we are not certain he would not eat the enemy as well, did the good of the cause render such a gastronomical feat necessary. He has already given ample proofs of his fire-eating propensities; for a local Opportunist having spoken disrespectfully of the General, the peppery Lamouroux did not hesitate to challenge him to a sanguinary duel, and introduced his toasting-fork into his enemy's ribs in a very businesslike way.

All the preliminary work of selection being finished, nothing remained but to put the names on paper. For this purpose books were prepared, each department being arranged in such a way that the General can see at a glance how matters stand with the candidates for each *circonscription*, and, after the elections, these books will serve as a record of the results obtained in each constituency by the various candidates.

A great many of the future Deputies are already on the spot, visiting their electors, carrying on an active canvass, and preparing generally for the great day. As to Paris, the General has already issued a manifesto; things are there being pushed forward with

the greatest energy, and it is confidently expected that Boulangist candidates will triumph all along the line.

Naturally we have not failed to consult the various Deputies, journalists, and candidates who have been over to London during the last month, and were not surprised to find they all agree in saying that matters stand very much as they did before the departure of the General. As one of the most influential of them said :

"The Eiffel Tower can do nothing to increase Ferry's popularity ; the success of the Exhibition cannot turn the Tonquin expedition into a creditable performance; the marvellous machinery gallery will not console those who have suffered from the iniquitous religious persecution ; and the mayors' banquet was not likely to rehabilitate MM. Rouvier, Thevenet, and Constans, nor inspire the mayors with any greater respect for these worthies. The country is no better governed now than last year ; the same need of reform still exists, and will make itself felt during the coming elections. In spite of all that has been done, the situation has not changed, and the electors who voted for Boulanger in August, 1888, and January, 1889, are determined to do the same at the forthcoming elections."

In order to take time by the forelock, several newspapers have long since published a complete account of the coming change in the order of things across the Channel. The *Figaro* published a specially written number entirely devoted to an account of Boulanger's accession to power, giving minute details of the various incidents which marked the transformation. This was a rather serious article, as may be supposed from the fact of it being published in a first-class paper like the *Figaro*.

Another journal, going further still, published a rather witty number, in which, starting from the hypothesis that Boulanger would at once be crowned as emperor, proceeded to give an account of the subsequent proceedings. After producing a proclama-

tion, somewhat Napoleonic in tone, signed "*Georges Ier, Empereur des Français*," they went on to give a list of the newly formed Ministry, in which figured the most prominent Boulangists. Count Dillon was appointed Minister of Finances, whilst Rochefort was placed at the head of the Ministry of Fine Arts.

Then came a batch of decrees, signed by the various Ministers, reversing everything that had been ordained by their predecessors, and descriptions of the state of public opinion in Paris and the principal cities in France. Further on the enterprising seer gave extracts from the most influential French and foreign newspapers, most of them tending to show that the change of Government was likely to prove an unmixed blessing to all classes of the community, and increase the *prestige* of the French nation abroad. The *Times* article was a masterpiece of journalistic trimming, and any one reading it could guess that a few days later "the organ of the city," as they call it in France, would be an ardent supporter of the new emperor. A footnote explained that its Paris correspondent, overcome with despair at having failed to foresee coming events, had committed suicide by jumping off the Eiffel Tower. It appears that he had chosen this method of quitting the scene of so many journalistic triumphs because he wished to disappear in a manner worthy of the great paper he represented, and to provide a column of copy for his weeping Parisian *confrères*.

After a series of telegrams describing the public rejoicings in different parts of the country, the editor wound up with a paragraph informing his readers that the best place to get a cheap suit of clothes was at 666, Boulevard des Italiens. Our readers will probably have guessed that this journalistic production was due to the inventive genius of an enterprising Poole, anxious to extend his business.

In order to see for ourselves the way in which the campaign was

being carried on by the various candidates, we determined to pay a short visit to Paris. At Calais, we met two Foreign Officers messengers, one carrying despatches from M. Waddington to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the other documents from General Boulanger to some friends in Paris. As we settled down for the journey, a comic idea occurred to us, and we said to them:

"Gentlemen, what a pretty omelet you could make by exchanging your respective documents, so that the joyous Spuller would receive the General's correspondence, and the General would have the pleasure of reading M. Waddington's private opinion about Boulanger and his movement!"

Notwithstanding the extremely genial nature of this proposal the two messengers appeared to hesitate before putting it into practice, and finally determined to keep their papers. M. Spuller's friend, who had a despatch bag big enough to sleep in, slept *on* it, so that he had not the slightest fear of any mistake being made *en route.*

After having interviewed the chiefs of the principal parties, taken a good look round Paris to see how the placarding business was going on, we thought it would not be uninteresting to find out what was being done by the Boulangists, and called at their offices in the Rue Galilée.

There everything is organized, both for Paris and the Departments, and the greatest activity is reigning throughout the building. The gentleman who carried out, under Count Dillon's instructions, the arrangements for the Paris election last January, is entrusted with the same delicate task for the forthcoming general elections; and if the result is only as satisfactory this time as it was then, the General will have no reason to complain.

The General, Count Dillon, and Henri Rochefort are all candidates, and there can be very little doubt as to the result of these

elections. The Government cannot prevent their standing for a constituency, and the Chamber of Deputies can alone decide as to the validity of their elections. As the Chamber is sure to be composed of new men, there will probably be no difficulty about their validation.

Though the electoral campaign has not yet reached its highest pitch, yet there are not signs wanting that the struggle will be extremely intense, especially during the ten days preceding the momentous Sunday.

The Government is proceeding with its dismissals; one man, simply for having shaken hands with Paul Déroulède, has been dismissed; an unfortunate curate, called Ernest Boulanger, wanting to send a telegram signed in full with his name and address, was not allowed to do so, and was forced to put his *initials*. Nothing relating to Boulanger is allowed to pass over the wires.

Manifestoes are now appearing daily, from Prince Victor and and other chiefs of parties, and it is said that the automatic president, M. Sadi Carnot, is about to execute a series of movements dictated by those who work him, which will result in the production of a manifesto. This is not exactly constitutional, but that does not trouble them; it will do them more harm than good, but they do not like to compromise their well-established reputation by missing this splendid chance of making a huge blunder.

The system of personal abuse inaugurated by Lucie Q. Beaurepaire is being continued with the utmost vigour by the ministerial newspapers; they are so violent, they tell such absurd, palpable lies that they positively insult the reader's good sense, by supposing them capable of believing such a collection of stupid inventions. By acting in this way, they cannot but defeat their own ends, and create a feeling a disgust against themselves which must make itself clearly felt at the elections.

The philosophic *flaneur*, doing the Exhibition in the day-time

and the boulevards in the evening, can scarcely realize the fact that in a few days a mighty struggle will take place, which must exercise an immense influence on the fortunes and destinies of France. The fact is, sixty per cent. of those who are now enjoying themselves here know little and care less about the political side of French life; content to take Paris as she is, with all her brightness, pleasures, and surprises, they wisely leave politics to those who are that way inclined. There are, no doubt, some who would look upon a lively election fight as a sort of agreeable supplement to the already long list of amusements provided for them by the amiable Republic; but we think these sceptical philosophers will have to forego that pleasure, for, though the struggle will certainly be an ardent one, yet there is no reason to expect it will be anything but orderly and peaceable.

Looking down from our window at the Grand Hotel into the courtyard below, crowded with a brilliant, happy throng, all bent on enjoyment, taking their ease in their favourite "Inn," sipping their coffee after dinner, admiring the illuminated fountains, it struck us that there were no signs of agitation, nothing to indicate that these happy travellers were dancing on the famous volcano which is said to exist in Paris, but which very few people have visited.

The great question now exciting every one's mind is, whether the General will return to Paris; and naturally each partisan has a pet theory on the point. We have heard scores of these theories during the last few days, and have learnt from advocates of his return how many different and curious ways there are of getting into Paris in a quiet, modest way, without attracting undue attention.

Some are greatly in favour of a balloon; others speak very highly of the General assuming the *rôle* of organ-grinder, market-gardener, or bricklayer, in order to get into the city unobserved.

One enthusiastic partisan would like him to make his first appearance at the Hippodrome, surrounded by 20,000 friends.

Once inside, he could make a speech of a few words, sit down, and quietly await the arrival of the limbs of the law. The latter would certainly have the greatest difficulty in getting near enough to arrest Boulanger, who could quietly retire, return to his hotel, and sleep like a man who had just done a good evening's work.

On the other hand, there are certain pessimistic disciples, men to whom the "Battle of Life" appears hardly worth fighting, who seem to think that should Boulanger return to Paris he would be delicately taken in hand by his old friend Constans and provided with a pretty fortified villa in the country, far from the troubles, trials, and temptations that would certainly assail the General were he to remain in Paris. These imitation Schopenhauers do not hesitate to proclaim their belief that should Boulanger once enter such a fortified villa, he would not come out again in a hurry, and that he would do well to keep a taster for all his food and drink.

Before leaving London we boldly asked the interested parties what would be their course of action, and must admit that we got what energetic bookmakers called the "straight tip."

"If you think we can tell you anything about this little matter you make the greatest mistake you ever made in your life."

A blind man would have seen the force of this reply, in which there was nothing approaching circumlocution. Being thus thrown on our own resources, we determined to direct our attention to another source of information, and ultimately arrived at a sort of understanding on this important point.

If we are correctly informed, there is not, at the present moment, any *known* decision about the matter; there are two

extremely delicate questions now pending, the solution of which will decide about the General's return. If question number one predominates, he will remain in London; but should the second matter yield the results a great many expect from it, then the General will return to Paris.

Being ourselves always very much of the School of Blucher, whose motto was "Forward!" and knowing that the General is, as a rule, a partisan of offensive tactics, we should not be surprised to learn that he had decided to return, and place himself entirely in the hands of the people, his only judge.

The enterprising correspondents of certain papers have already announced the General's forthcoming departure, and fixed the date for the 16th of September; but as they have announced so many things about Boulanger which have not been realized, we, who are becoming sceptical in our old age, prefer to wait till we see the General in Paris before putting any faith in these inspired communications.

CHAPTER XV.

FORECAST OF HIS FUTURE PROSPECTS.

POLITICAL prophets naturally find themselves in a very painful position when they endeavour to exercise their prophetic powers on the present political situation in France. The number of conflicting parties; the peculiar political temperament of the French people; the personal element, which is always so preponderant, the coalitions formed for a certain object only to collapse as soon as that object is attained: all these things render their task a very difficult one.

Either they have nothing to base their opinions on, or the basis of such opinions suddenly shifts, and leaves them as far from the truth as ever. A weathercock is a fixed object compared with a majority in the French Chamber as at present constituted, where what does duty as a Government is always at the mercy of its enemies—and its friends. If A, who is leader of a "group," is dissatisfied with B, the Minister in power—and he always is,—he forthwith enters into an alliance with C, the leader of a "group" of a totally different colour from his own, but equally opposed to the Government. They thus consummate what is known in France as the marriage of the carp and the rabbit, a sort of union never foreseen by Nature or man, and not very likely to be productive of much good to any one. These two political worthies put their heads and "groups" together, for the purpose of overthrowing the obnoxious Ministry.

This patriotic result having been obtained, A and C give each other a vigorous parting kick, and go their own ways again for a time. They are, however, sure to meet again; for A will probably contrive to obtain the reins of Government himself, and have to meet B and C, who kiss the kiss of peace in order to unite their forces to overthrow A, whose only crime is that he is in power. The height of political absurdity is sometimes reached when A, B, and C, forgetting all their old quarrels, form a sort of political "happy family" in order to demolish D, some new and vigorous chief of some equally vigorous "group." There are sufficient distinct parties in the French Chamber to run through the alphabet in this way; but we will spare our readers a cruel, undeserved infliction by drawing the line here.

When a Chinese puzzle of this exciting nature has been played before an indulgent public for ten or a dozen years, the latter naturally begin to tire of the sport, however interesting it may appear to the players themselves, who have private reasons for enjoying it.

This feeling of lassitude is all the stronger in the public mind, from the fact that they are aware such nations as Germany and Italy do all in their power to perpetuate it, knowing full well that a country which tolerates such a performance must necessarily become less and less dangerous as a military power, and ultimately sink into a sort of national imbecility.

When E arrives on the scene, and resolutely announces that he thinks this enfeebling parliamentary pastime has lasted long enough, the public naturally take sides with the bold and practical E, who immediately becomes a power in the land and a terror to the Chinese puzzle players, who are furious at being disturbed at their little game, especially as the little game in question has for prizes the finances, the honours, and the power of the country.

Our readers will naturally have concluded that E is no other

than General Boulanger, who has never had the slightest admiration for Chinese puzzles as applied to the government of a great nation, and who thinks, with the people, that the system has proved to be a rotten one, and should be abolished at once, if the country is not to be dragged down into complete ruin. Having consulted the country on various occasions during the last year, he has everywhere received the same emphatic answer,—

"Yes; we have had enough of this parliamentary farce. We want a Government to do the business of the country, instead of devoting its energies to the interests of the favoured few within the magic Government circle."

The voice of the people thus clearly expressed authorized Boulanger in going to the Chamber to demand that the game should be stopped, and we have seen with what howls of rage and hatred he was received. The players found it too profitable to give up, and have carried it on with more or less vigour up to the present time. It is true they consented to a sort of truce during the first month of the Exhibition; but as the heathen Chinee yearns for his enervating opium, so were these people burning to begin their game again, the more so from the fact that they knew how little time they had to collect spoil and booty. The general elections are fast coming on, when they must quit the Chamber, into which they have very little hope of being re-admitted.

They know Boulanger and his friends have the mass of the nation on their side; but the stakes are too high, not to induce them to make a desperate struggle against those who are determined to cleanse the political temple.

Naturally they have the support of whoever is in place, whoever holds a sinecure or a Government appointment, or wants to get one; but these individuals, having neither *prestige* nor influence over the electors, are not of much importance. Moreover there is this notable difference between the two parties in presence: the people

are firmly convinced that Boulanger is working for them, whilst they have had ample proofs of late years that the Opportunist faction is actuated by purely personal, sordid motives.

Whilst the Opposition fractions sailing under one flag were engaged in quarrelling amongst themselves as to what group should consummate the country's ruin, Boulanger and his friends were quietly elaborating their plan of campaign, superbly indifferent as to whether the Government adopted the system of elections by departments or by districts, or prohibited a plurality of candidatures, in the vain hope of preventing the General from being elected in more than one constituency. All that may be important for professional political manipulators, who calculate the number of their votes as a bookmaker does his "odds"; but Boulanger has quite another system, far simpler, far more straightforward. In the first place, he has no need to make himself known, explain his views, or make a parade of his political record or future programme; his portrait and biography are in every Frenchman's hands, and throughout the country his name, together with the necessary voting papers, will be quite sufficient to secure him or his nominee a majority wherever they may decide to stand.

As a contrast to this, we may remind our readers of the fact, that when Boulanger's chief opponent, M. Jules Ferry, thought of standing for the Presidency, it was the signal for a revolution, to avoid which the Congress very wisely preferred to elect a respectable nonentity like Carnot.

We know of a certain room in the west of London which contains a complete plan of electoral campaign; nothing is wanting, plans, maps, statistics, reports, and results from all parts of France. These enable the General and Count Dillon to feel the pulse of the country as well as a doctor does that of a patient just recovering from a cruel malady which has kept her prostrate for years. These two political doctors have, we may fairly say, cured their

country of a fearful, almost mortal, illness, the Opportunist fever, and can hope that the month of October will see their patient on her feet again, strong and courageous as ever, ready to take her place amongst other nations.

The plans devised by the General for his election campaign are very simple; he is ready to stand for one Parisian constituency, whilst the rest of the seats will be left to his candidates, taking as their ticket his entire programme, and pledging themselves to support him, not only during the elections, but afterwards in the Chamber. Naturally, hundreds of responsible men have come forward, men who fully approve of, and are anxious to adopt, this programme, to pay their own election expenses, and loyally support the General in his efforts to save their country.

But Boulanger's real strength lies in his wonderful popularity with the electors themselves. For the first time in the political history of France, the provinces are marching hand in hand with Paris; and this is an important point, which has not escaped the attention of the Opportunists, who frankly acknowledge what is, to them, a dangerously significant symptom.

In a previous paragraph we have touched on the financial question, which has always greatly exercised the minds of those whom it does not in the least concern. In fact, the French newspapers had at one time a special column devoted to the elucidation of this burning question, "*Where does the money come from?*" and that phrase became as much a by-word in France as, "*Have you seen the Shah?*" in England. All sorts of men were said to be "financing" the movement. John Mackay, the Bonanza King, Gordon Bennett, the prince of newspaper proprietors, Heriot, the mammoth draper of "Louvre" reputation, were, in turn, credited with this honour; and we are surprised that the knowing ones did not add some such name as Baron Rothschild, he being just as likely a person as any of those mentioned.

The fact of the matter is, the money comes from people who sympathise with Boulanger in the patriotic work he is engaged in; and we need not say that most of these are French, men of all classes, who are anxious to help, according to their means, to liberate the country from its present position. It must also be remembered that the departments themselves generally meet their own expenses; as an instance of this we may mention that the journey to Tours, where the General had such a magnificent reception, and probably gained over thousands of partisans, simply cost the price of the railway fares for his orderly officer and private secretary, he and his fellow deputies travelling free. The rest of the expenses were met by the members of the Local Committee, who were fully recouped by the sale of the tickets for the banquet, which was an immense success, thanks to their efforts.

As to what the Opposition people are fond of calling the Boulangist "official organs," we should very much like to know where they are; the *Presse* belongs to M. Laguerre, who manages his newspaper as a commercial enterprise, as does M. Lalou, proprietor of *La France*, and M. le Herissé, the representative of the group to which the *Cocarde* belongs. The public takes such great interest in everything relating to Boulanger, that any newspaper, author, composer, or singer having anything interesting to say, write, or sing about him is sure of a wide public; we know many who have done splendid business with Boulanger publications—editors, authors, engravers, photographers, and printsellers. In fact, the movement has benefited all classes of the community; by putting money in circulation which might perhaps have been hoarded up, Boulanger has made, not one blade, but a whole field of corn grow where nothing was growing before, and can, if only on that score, fairly claim to have contributed to the general good. Most of these publications have been undertaken quite independently of Boulanger, who frequently

knew nothing about them till the authors brought him the proofs of their work. Wherever he went, money was spent in the course of business, not necessarily by him, but by those who saw a chance of doing legitimate trade. The only money actually *distributed* by Boulanger or his friends was thrown by facetious journalists to those individuals who had expended their energies in whistling the General down; but as these sums never exceeded a penny, it may be inferred that this is not the sole cause of his marvellous success. Even in London, Boulanger has been the means of bringing several people into prominence: witness the charming and talented young lady who first sang "*En revenant de la Revue*" at a popular place of entertainment; we believe she would not deny that the General has been beneficial to her in her artistic career, though his wildest enemy would not venture to say she had received anything from his treasury.

Though it may sound odd to practical Englishmen, who are not that way inclined, we know many of all classes who have worked very hard for Boulanger without the slightest pecuniary reward; a word of thanks, a shake of the hand, from the General, has amply repaid them. The cause is so popular, a Boulangist is so sure of being well received as a canvasser or what not, that they all work with greater energy than mere paid agents. Thus it will be seen that Boulangism is largely self-supporting, and the General himself would lose his reputation for smartness were he to spend any money in propagating his name and programme whilst it is done for him, gratis, by his friends, who are powerfully aided by his bitterest enemies, who have done so much to further his cause by their utter ignorance of the power of silent contempt as applied to a political opponent.

Should any one do us the honour of asking for our opinion as to Boulanger's chances in the coming struggle, we should reply somewhat as follows:

Boulanger will certainly succeed:

Because he has on his side everything necessary to effect his object. He has displayed the qualities of a thorough leader, has attracted and retained powerful and able supporters, contrived to permanently conciliate many conflicting parties and interests, and always kept his party well in hand. The individuals who were anxious to create a party within a party, or displayed a tendency to "kick" against his authority, have been politely requested to leave the Committee and "kick" at large, on their own responsibility. He has imprinted his own personal mark on everything that is done on his side, so that all sections of the party, which has ramifications throughout France, obey as one man the impulse they receive from London. It may sound trite to repeat the old saying, "*Union is strength*"; but as a matter of fact, this is one of the secrets of Boulanger's strength, as the absence of all union is the principal cause of his opponents' weakness. As a proof of the latter statement, we have only to refer to the deplorable state of affairs in the Opposition camp, where there are already four avowed candidates for the Presidency of the Republic, a post which is not yet vacant.

Carnot naturally desires to stay where he is; Ferry, notwithstanding his painful experience in 1887, is still convinced that he is the man of the situation; Freycinet, "*the little white mouse*," gradually developing into a wily old fox, is quietly waiting for an opportunity to steal out of his ministerial hole to slip into the presidential chair; whilst even the bombastic and shallow Charles Floquet lays the flattering unction to his soul that he can depend on a majority this time.

We leave our readers to imagine what intrigues are being carried on, what plots laid, what sordid calculations are made by these various candidates, devoured by an impotent, raging ambition, who all ought to be working for the common good of the

country, but who spend their time plotting one against the other. What charming reunions they must have! what honeyed smiles, what compliments, what mutual congratulations over what they probably look upon as the final discomfiture of their arch-enemy, Boulanger, exiled in London! And in short, what a *quatuor* to hold in its hands the destinies of a great nation like France!

We make no mention of the M. Clémenceau who formerly had a certain position in the country, for he is, politically speaking, defunct, and probably remembers with bitterness, as he wanders disconsolately about the *foyer* of the Opera, the prophetic remark made to him one day by one of his journalistic *confrères*:

"Clémenceau, my dear boy, you'll either have to eat Boulanger or he'll eat you!"

Boulanger has swallowed the tough morsel, and all we can say for Clémenceau is, "*Requiescat in pace!*"

Boulanger must succeed:

Because, strange as it may appear, he is the only one who can hope to do so. This fact is frankly recognised by all Republicans, as well as by the more modern, sensible Conservatives, Royalists, Buonapartists, and other fractions of the Right. The Conservatives know their hopes are now weaker than ever; the death of their leaders, the divisions in their Princes' families, the political timidity of certain of their chiefs have led them to the mournful conclusion that a restoration of anything like a monarchy or an empire is now a practical impossibility, which it would be worse than madness to attempt. This conviction, deeply rooted in the minds of all thinking men, has led them to rally round Boulanger. But what has chiefly induced them to adopt this attitude is the fact that the rank and file of their electors had done this beforehand, thus obliging them to follow, *nolens volens*. The Conservative leaders are therefore Boulangists by the gentle but firm persuasion of their electors, who have long since told them in clear language:

"You, the leaders of the party, can be what you like; we are Boulangists!"

Now every one can see how easy it must be for an army of electors to improvize a chief; but it would be utterly impossible for the most talented political leader to call into existence an army of electors. There are only a given number of voters in the country, and if they go one way, the leaders cannot manufacture another army to march in an opposite direction; they are consequently obliged to go with the troops, unless they want to play the parts of phantom officers to an absent army. The Conservatives have understood this, and have obeyed the impulse given by their electors; they have readily admitted that they prefer to vote for a Boulangist Republic rather than perpetuate the detested and detestable Opportunist *régime*, which has ruined them financially, harassed them in their religious convictions, and brought the country to its present low ebb.

Thus the long dreamed of fusion has been effected by Boulanger: sincere Republicans like Naquet, Buonapartists like Jolibois and Dugué de la Fauconnerie, Royalists like the Comte de Mun, advanced Republicans like Rochefort—who is a tremendous political power, in Paris especially, where he is blindly followed by 500,000 daily readers,—have all consented to accept the Boulangist programme, to sink their party, personal differences, and to work together in one common, patriotic cause. Strange sign of the times, many of the reddest of Radicals are also ready to follow Boulanger; so that in reality the general elections will resolve themselves into a pitched battle between the solitary Opportunists, headed by M. Jules Ferry, and the National party, led by General Boulanger, supported by the leaders and the rank and file of the Republican, Royalist, and Buonapartist parties, and a contingent of the more advanced sections of French politicians.

Better than this, should certain sections of Ferry's supporters

see him gaining ground personally, they would not hesitate to desert and oppose him, so cordially is he detested by many, who are obliged, for a time, to fight under the same banner by his side.

Boulanger's triumph is certain—

Because he is the only man in whom the entire country has confidence, the only one who has succeeded in inspiring all classes of Frenchmen with those sentiments of patriotic hope which they had never felt since the fatal war of 1870. Men of all parties still look up to him as the natural, if not the official, Chief of the army. Were the entire population consulted as to who should take the supreme command of the army, nine-tenths would certainly reply, Boulanger!

Far from seeing in this unlimited confidence any warlike tendency, we may look upon it as the surest guarantee of peace; the cry that "*Boulanger means war!*" being one of the greatest absurdities ever invented by the Opportunist faction, except, perhaps, that other cowardly cry raised during the Paris elections, "*No more Sedans!*" which elicited such a scathing response from Boulanger.

The people believe that he would be able to carry on the affairs of the country without turning towards Berlin for his cue, and that he would find men capable of representing France in a more dignified manner than is done by certain ambassadors, who appear to act more like lackeys at the court to which they are accredited than anything else. The people consider, with the General, that France has a perfect right, nay, that it is her duty, to hold up her head as high as any other nation; that the era for grovelling in the dust before Bismarck or any one else has gone by; and that the time has now come to make a firm, dignified stand, as free from provocation as from servility. The attitude assumed by Boulanger when Minister of War—an attitude which

was fully approved by the entire nation—is a sure guarantee that he would not fail to give France that position she has a right to take up among European nations.

There being no doubt whatever as to Boulanger's success, the question arises—

With these various and powerful elements, how can we wonder that Boulanger should look upon his success as a moral certainty?

"What will he do when he gets into power?"

The first thing will be the fulfilment of the programme he marked out for himself at the commencement of his political career, and to which he has remained so faithful. He must operate the revision, call together *a Constituente*, put the constitution into proper shape, and not till then can he discuss the question of the practical reforms to be effected.

In a country where the rulers have spent years in disorganizing everything, morally and materially, everything has to be reconstructed; and it will certainly take a long time to repair the evils wrought by the sorry set of men who have been exploiting the country during the last decade.

Of course it would be quite impossible for Boulanger himself to predict exactly what he would do after his instalment in power. That being so, it would be rank presumption on our part to attempt to do so. We can, however, modestly point out what could be done by a man having a free hand and that unlimited confidence of the country enjoyed by the General.

Granted the existence of a Constitution suited to the wants of the majority of the community, and sufficiently liberal to satisfy the various shades of political thought, he could endow France with a settled, stable Government, released from the caprices, the ambitions, and the sordid calculations of a shifting and incompetent parliamentary majority. This in itself would be an untold

blessing to the whole nation; France would then be able to treat with other powers, who would know that negotiations once commenced would be carried through by the same Minister, instead of being allowed to drag on through successive Ministries, until the unfortunate ambassadors are positively tired of going over the same ground, performing a task compared with which that of Sisyphus was an agreeable pastime.

Striking illustrations of this necessity were lately given by the English Government informing the French Cabinet that it preferred to wait for the constitution of a new Ministry before discussing the Egyptian question; and by the statement that the Russians, anxious to conclude a war convention with France intended to wait till the forthcoming general elections were over. No Cabinet, we think, had ever before received such really humiliating reminders of its practical non-existence.

Such a man could restore religious tolerance in its widest and best sense, inaugurating a *régime* under which every one would have a right to his religious belief, and to practise it as he thought fit, free from persecution; a *régime* under which the priest would be entitled to all the rights enjoyed by other citizens, perfect freedom of conscience; perfect freedom of action, perfect equality in every respect, including, perhaps, the privilege of paying his tribute of military service as other citizens do.

The judges and magistrates of the country could and should be made absolutely independent of the Government, and allowed to deliver judgments, not made to render services to the Government for party reasons. Every citizen would then be as equal before the law in France as he is in England, where the Lord Chief Justice lately delivered a judgment which redounds to the credit of the bench, and does infinite honour to the country in which it was possible to deliver it.

The financial system of the country could be reformed; in-

famous sinecures, shameful jobbery, could be suppressed; and a capable, honest set of men put in the places of those who have so long been exploiting the public treasury and brought the country to the verge of bankruptcy.

The infamous system of spies could be abolished; citizens would be allowed to go about their business unmolested by the army of *mouchards*, maintained by the Ministers at the public expense for the purpose of spying their enemies and even their "friends." For it is well known to those behind the scenes, that each Minister has minions in his service who watch the movements of the other Ministers, and even of the President of the Republic himself. As to the latter, it is not surprising, when we consider that several Ministers are the President's keenest rivals, and easily persuade themselves that they have a right to know what is going on inside the Presidency.

Last, but not least, the various questions respecting the welfare of the working classes would have a chance of being discussed and carried into law. The poor have been systematically neglected by the Opportunists, engaged in the sterile discussions and quarrels of parties; social questions fully discussed and ripe for solution have been disdainfully shelved by the very men who had obtained their seats by specious promises made to the electors; each succeeding Ministry has postponed everything relating to the wants of the masses: and the result is, that whilst intestine struggles have taken up the time of the Chamber, the work of the nation has been left undone, put off to a more convenient season, which never has and never would arrive if the Opportunists had their way. This state of things should and would certainly be remedied, the poor would have their business attended to, and the questions in which they are so strongly interested would at last receive a fair share of attention.

France has just shown, by her magnificent Exhibition, that

her vital energies are as strong as ever, her artists as clever, her engineers as enterprising, and her workmen as skilful: why should it not be possible to prove that there are still men in the country capable of carrying on its affairs in a straightforward, honest way? For years such men have held aloof, disgusted by the sickening spectacle of Opportunist follies, when they have not been systematically excluded from power by the clique to whom an honest man is a living insult, and the cry "Down with the Swindlers!" a reproach which they instinctively take unto themselves. But the time has now come when this state of things will be changed, and the honest party will have its innings. The mass of the nation is honest, straightforward, and laborious; the Wilsons, the Constans, the Rouviers, and the Thevenets are a miserable minority, destined to be hurled back into the obscurity from which they ought never to have been allowed to emerge,—unless indeed Justice should step in, call upon them to account for some of their shady transactions, and mete out to them the punishment they have so richly deserved.

It would be absurd to suppose that the advent of any man, however capable he might be, could possibly bring about the immediate execution of all the various reforms we have just foreshadowed; nevertheless we have a right to hope and expect that, should Boulanger be placed in a position to do so, he would be able to work great improvements in the affairs of the country; he has, during his short political career, overcome so many difficulties, outlived so many "statesmen," overthrown so many schemes invented to entrap him, and kept his party together in such a way, as warrants us in concluding that, if he has achieved all these things whilst working single-handed and with the whole force of a powerful Government against him, he would, if he disposed of the necessary power, be capable of putting into action, for the benefit of his country, those solid qualities which have

placed him in the unique position he now occupies. Every revolution, every change of Government that has taken place in France up to the present has always left behind it a venomous "tail" of beaten and discontented adversaries, who have immediately constituted themselves into the most ferocious enemies of the new Government. Boulanger, on the contrary, has contrived to reduce this usually dangerous contingent to a harmless minimum. The majority of the Conservatives are quite ready to loyally accept the Republic as he understands it, the best part of the Republicans are with him heart and soul; there would thus remain nothing but the Opportunist section of the Republicans, should they obtain an entry into the new Parliament, which is very doubtful, M. Jules Ferry himself having every chance of being blackballed in his own department, as Jacques was in his own district in Paris. But even the latter could not stand out long, for they would be reduced to the very curious and absurd position of Republicans who refuse to recognise a Republic! The sane portion of this harmless minority would soon see the absurdity of their position, and frankly accept the inevitable; whilst as to the rest, they would naturally be so insignificant that the Government could afford to treat them with indulgent contempt.

The nation being thus appeased, and all parties satisfied with the improved state of things, would be prepared to give the new men sufficient time to enable them to show what they were capable of doing. The Government, freed from the daily necessity of maintaining itself against the imbecile attacks of a hungry, yelping, capricious opposition, could devote all its attention to serious business. The President would be directly responsible to the nation for the government of the country; the Chamber would be responsible to the President for the making of all laws; whilst each Minister would be responsible to the President for the due execution of those laws as far as they concerned his department,

and no further. The era of irresponsibility, jobbery, and peculation would be brought to a natural close; the people would know exactly who to blame; the President, the Ministers, and the Deputies would all feel they were individually responsible for their personal acts.

A sensible, stable system of Government being thus established, the country would taste a political peace it has never known since 1870, and could quietly devote all its energies to the development of its vast resources, and to the consolidation of its position, within and without.

The people, judging Boulanger by what he has already done, the only common-sense way of judging any man, give him credit for being capable of doing a great deal of all this, and are determined to afford him the necessary opportunity. The forthcoming elections will be a definite ratification of the General's policy, and be inaugurated throughout the country with the cry that has been ringing from one end of France to the other during the last three years, *Vive la République! Vive Boulanger!*

Butler & Tanner, The Selwood Printing Works, Frome, and London.

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on 27 November, 2018